COLLECTOR'S LUCK

A charming Sheraton secretary — a delicate piece with tambour doors and beautiful marquetry — filled with rare lustre pitchers.

Collector's Luck

Or, A Repository of *Pleasant* and *Profitable* Discourses Descriptive of the *Household Furniture* and *Ornaments* of Olden Time. By ALICE VAN LEER CARRICK

De Luxe Edition

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TO ORDE AND ALICIA

PREFACE

I WANT to write another dedication as well: to times past and gone; to the men and women who lived then; and to these old things that are the tangible, present symbols of their faraway lives. Do you know, I often find collectors learning history from a little, personal angle that more academic scholars oftentimes overlook. How else could I have known with such happiness my adored Horace Walpole or gossiping Pepys? Margaret Winthrop and Eliza Pinckney stretch sisterly hands across the years to me, and I count among my intimates Judge Samuel Sewall and worthy Cotton Mather.

For, if you collect the right way, — and there *is* but one right way, — you cannot help absorbing the politics and art and religion of your chosen period. Collecting is n't just a fad; it is n't even just a "divine madness": properly interpreted, it is a liberal education.

And so to these old days and ways that have been my kindest guides, and to the readers who have walked with me awhile in this pleasant *pays bleu*, I rededicate "Collector's Luck."

A. V. L. C.

WEBSTER COTTAGE
HANOVER, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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COLLECTOR'S LUCK

I

COLLECTOR'S LUCK

The world is so full of a number of things
I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings.

If I were a physician prescribing for the ills of body and mind, I know I should have one sovereign remedy. Even now, as a layman, I present my panacea. If you are dull, if you are unhappy, if you are bored — collect! It gets you out of doors, it gets you out of yourself, and, best of all, if you do it intelligently, you cannot help knowing something more about the world's history and civilization. You are creating a background. These joys have been mine, and I speak as one having authority because, through the width of our countryside, I am now known as one of the "antique ladies." The other is L——, and together, through storm and sunshine, along dusty roads and up unspeakably muddy lanes, from sunrise until there is hardly a light left twinkling in the lonely farmhouses, we have followed and found our treasures. Of course, you do not always have to go so far afield; even in our little country town there are frequently sales, removals, people willing to "part with" some heirloom. There is, for instance,

one ancient house that we watch with quickened breath every time we pass by, for local legend says that in it is a walled-up closet of old blue china. Years ago the eccentric owner grew tired of it, and took this unique way of ridding her mind of its presence. Now, some day, that house is going to be torn down and take its eighteenth-century picturesqueness out of the way of village improvement; and then — ! Already our imaginations have purchased countless Staffordshire platters and faintly blue Nankin teacups.

My little country town is also a college town, and, thirty or forty years ago, when old furniture was in complete disrepute, I have no doubt that wonderful "finds" might have been made here. Even now, at students' sales, — apparently it is not seemly for any man to graduate with more than his degree and a few clothes, — I have known two charming little tables, one an inlaid Hepplewhite, the other a rope-carved Empire, to be picked up, the first for a dollar, the second for twenty-five cents. And in earlier generations, when Thomas or Henry came to our "classic college halls," bearing with them all the family's worst furniture: highboys and lowboys, block-front chests and fiddle-back chairs, — really, anything from the attic would do for a boy's room, and the Mid-Victorian plush was safe in the best parlor, — what the Faculty might have found if only they had known!

But to discover heirlooms and want most earnestly to get them is n't always enough, even though you have a distinct "flair" for such things. Patience also is necessary. Way back on the hills, near a blue little sheltered lake, I know where there is a house — a barn, too — cram-jam full of old things: pink lustre, brass, and pewter; carved chairs and a claw-foot sofa hidden from envious eyes deep down in the hay; and on the sitting-room mantelpiece a lovely "proof" Boston Common platter. Cows graze placidly on its blue surface, and, I regret to say, through the open-work of the china edge a white satin ribbon runs neatly and ties on one side in a preposterous rosette! It is the only fitting pendant to its city cousin, the gilded Barye lion, its tail pink-bowed, that I have ever seen. And sell these treasures? Not for anything that the owner has been offered yet; but some day his heirs will, and that is why, like Mrs. Bofkin, we "sit and watch with pious patience." And there is the funniest old lady that we have met on our "antique-ing" trips. She is the possessor of a maple highboy, nothing unusual, lacking brasses, and scrubbed by her with such relentless neatness that the surface is as white as if it had been scraped. She is unpersuadable; her price is "a hundred dollars, no more, no less," and when you hint at its exaggeration she just shakes her head and says, "Well, it can set a while longer. The critter don't eat nothin'!" Nobody will ever be able to buy it

for any reasonable sum; but the experience is valuable discipline to our optimism.

Now, having shown you the far enchantment of our hopes, let me tell you of some of our actual "finds." Unless you have known the stimulating varieties of a rural auction, it may be hard to visualize for you the happy pleasure of it all. Our North Country is so beautiful that to drive through it is a joy all by itself: to see its rolling foothills, its blue mountain distances, the intervales and rounded knolls that look as if some giant thing, centuries ago, had folded its hands and then lain down to sleep, and the grass had grown green over its clasped fingers. The roads themselves are "dusty with festival"; you follow a procession of all kinds of vehicles, for a country auction is a neighborhood entertainment; everybody goes. It was in just this sort of setting that L—— bought her ten-cent table. The wood is old black cherry; the legs are straight and grooved like some of the later Chippendale chairs, and the drop-leaves, when they are raised, make a surface over three feet square. At each end of the central board is an apron carved in charming curves, and yet this valuable piece was so dingy with time and disuse — it had apparently been shoved carelessly into an outhouse and left there for generations — that nobody wanted it, and L——'s ten-cent bid was left undisputed. It is in the process of renovation, and, alas, I cannot show it to you now,

A dignified Sheraton bureau of the type just merging into the Empire feeling, and showing wonderful wood-making. It cost $15.

An inlaid Heppelwhite card-table that cost $15. Its mahogany and marquetry are unusually delicate. The Sheffield cake-basket was bid in for $2.

Collection of Mrs. Carleton.

The auctioneer is a sensitive soul; do not irritate him; because of my deference, I got the warming-pan for $1.20.

but it is another proof of my theory of buying by line.

Here I want to present and insist upon another auction theory of mine — never offend the auctioneer! He is a sensitive soul, full of the pride of his profession, and, if you irritate him, by some subtle psychological process, he will make the crowd go on bidding. I don't know quite how he does it; I am merely aware that, because of my flattering deference, an excellently engraved warming-pan was dropped for $1.20 into my waiting hands. Moreover, a friendly auctioneer will always send you advance notices of his auctions; no small assistance to the collector who depends upon scattering village sales.

In just the same way it pays to be friendly to the gathering auction crowd. Not only the reward of virtue but of "Collector's Luck" will be yours. The people will tell you of bargains, they may even sell you some of their own possessions. This is how L—— got one of her finest pieces, a beautifully inlaid Hepplewhite card-table, for fifteen dollars. It is mahogany and its marquetry is so delicate and diverse that, if you saw it in a city shop instead of way back on an almost forsaken hillside, you would completely distrust its genuineness. The Sheffield cake-basket standing on it is another token of our auction energy, for it is in very good condition and was bid in for only two dollars.

I long for — and lack — time and space to describe

more minutely all our captured dreams: L——'s walnut early Georgian mirror, bought in a little Vermont village for five dollars and probably English; my black cherry Chippendale chair — the back is especially lovely — that cost me, in a little city shop, fourteen dollars; G——'s dignified Sheraton bureau (on page 5), — fifteen was its price, — the type just merging into the Empire feeling, and showing wonderful woodmarking; and H——'s entrancing helmet creamer — well, this I'll have to stop and tell you about.

We had walked, H—— and I, a pleasant pair of miles to the little "store" of a man who joined the trades of harness-maker and jockey and antique dealer all in one personality. Sometimes you found treasures there, and why, knowing this, I stopped at his gate to look back I have never known, except that the world was so very lovely. Nature had sat at ease in her fields that day and splashed her hillside canvasses with lavish color; and while I, luckless, gazed at the crimsons and golds, H—— walked in and bought the helmet creamer with its quaint blue and gilt bands for thirty-five cents. Then I said severely, quoting my Emerson, "H——, 'Things are of the snake!'" I should n't have minded twenty-five cents or fifty, but, somehow, thirty-five seems so improbable! In this game of mine hesitation means nearly always being lost, you know. Frankly, I believe in "Collector's Luck"

Collection of Mrs. Carleton.

This early Georgian walnut mirror was bought in a little Vermont village for $5.

From the author's collection.

The black cherry Chippendale chair that was bought for $14 in a little city shop.

Collection of Mrs. Frost.

This fine sofa, of a type usually called Chippendale, probably dates somewhere in the second half of the eighteenth century. It is over six feet long with a wide curving back and gracious arms.

very strongly, but one way of my belief is that you must never neglect an opportunity, that every clue is worth following, every auction worth attending for the sake of the possible prize that may be there. A certain energy of pursuit is necessary. That accounts for one of the finest sofas I have ever seen coming back into the possession of the original owners. It is over seven feet long, and very wide, with high, curving back and gracious arms, of a type usually called Chippendale, — the legs are straight and slightly grooved and quite unlike the later Sheraton, — and it probably dates somewhere in the second half of the eighteenth century. But for all its loveliness it fell upon evil Victorian days, and was given away to the local hospital. There it stayed, at one end of the upper corridor, covered with a concealing linen slip, and sat upon by countless unsuspecting collectors, — I, myself, was one of them, — until it grew rickety and was thrust away out of sight in one corner of the attic. My friend, who had always longed for it and laid plans for its capture, had no further need to think of herself as a potential Indian giver; she asked if she might buy back her father's gift, and the hospital authorities presented her with it, freely. Now it stands before her drawing-room fire, the earnest of her constant, unfailing hope that some day it would be hers.

Next comes my most amazing "luck" story, and, logically, I should save its dramatic thrill for a fitting

climax, but I can't wait. It really is L——'s tale, but I always have the fun of telling it because she is modest. I want you all to take Frances Morse's "Furniture of the Olden Time" — I feel as if I were a school-teacher — and turn to page 243. Look at the illustration opposite carefully, for this is the table I am going to talk about, and, besides, it is the most beautiful piece of Empire furniture that I have ever seen. Neither my photograph nor that in the book does justice to the excellence of the carving. Some time ago L—— showed this picture to our favorite dealer, and said, "I want you to get me a table like this some day." He promised — he is always obliging — but I don't think he thought it a probable purchase, for such tables are rare. Months later he telephoned that he had found one that he thought very similar in design and asked her to come down and see it; but it was not until they had examined it together and looked over the bill of sale, dated at Worcester and signed Mrs. John Smith, — you will notice that Frances Morse's text describes this table as owned by John Smith, Esq., of Worcester, — that they discovered it to be the identical table L—— had pointed out in the book. Was n't that an extraordinary coincidence? Our dealer had found it quite by chance, while hunting up a sideboard, and had bought it from the widow of its former owner. It really makes me think that, if people will just want anything in the world enough and in the right way,

Collection of Mrs. Carleton.

That lovely Empire table: a symbol of collector's luck raised to the *n*th power.

The final wreck of the home that has sheltered generations must of itself be sad—sad in this symbol of change, at least.

Once again I wish myself rich that I might buy the old place back for them, and give them all the things they have wanted and never got.

they will surely get it. I am wishing all of you limitless faith!

And I am wishing you, also, infinite sympathy. These joyous quests of mine are not always gayly colored, you see, for they are woven out of the fabric of life itself. An auction can be very pathetic; the breaking up, the final wrecking of the home that has sheltered generations, where little children have lived and played and laughed, must of itself be sad; sad in the symbol of change, at least. And, sometimes, the people are so very, very poor; old bent women and stooped old men; for years they have struggled with farm-lands barren as their lives, and hoped so to keep things together! I am thinking of two such cases now. Once again I wish myself rich that I might buy the old place back for them, and give them a Ford and a Victrola and all the things they've wanted and never got. And, then, magically, the pattern of my imagination changes to a happier color, and I remember the tale of the friend of a friend, an "antique" emotionalist like myself. I hope most earnestly to meet her some day; we would have so much in common. Now, not knowing her, I still can tell the story with admiring freedom. My friend's friend had gone to a hillside farmhouse in search of a platter famous throughout the neighborhood. It proved even lovelier than she had expected: its blue the deep, intense tone that old Staffordshire alone possesses. Her whole collecting heart went out

to it, and her modest tentative offer soon reached immoderation. But still the owner refused to sell it. At last, in desperation, the friend of my friend said, "Have I nothing to offer that would induce you to let me have it?"

Immediately the reply came, "Yes, ma'am, that skirt you've got on now."

"It's yours," answered my friend's friend, promptly stepping out of it. And she always adds when she tells the story, "And my good-fortune stayed with me for I had on a black taffeta petticoat!"

II

STENCILED FURNITURE

WERE you ever lucky like me, do you think? Did you ever find a set of stenciled chairs, softly brown and glowing with gold pomegranates and formalized flowers, and all six for six dollars? I did, and ever since then I have been wanting to tell you what can be done with stenciled furniture — old stencils when you can get them, new when you can't; for very few people know at all the charm of this quaint, early-nineteenth-century type, the far-away country cousin of the wonderful, long-ago oriental lacquer. Besides, in the late eighteenth century, Angelica Kaufmann, Pergolesi, and Cipriani, all painters of great vogue, worked for Robert and James Adam and decorated the furniture that these masters designed. If you have read "Quinney's," I am sure you have not forgotten the tragic affair of the satinwood commode with panels painted by the charming Angelica, and Jo's despair at its loss. In the reign of Louis XV, Martin, the famous French coach-painter, perfected his marvelous process of enamels now known as *vernis-Martin*, and even from mediæval days certain pieces of mobiliary furniture have been adorned and embellished by the addition of vivid color like the "sapphire, pearl and rich embroidery" that Shakespeare pictures as buckling below the bending

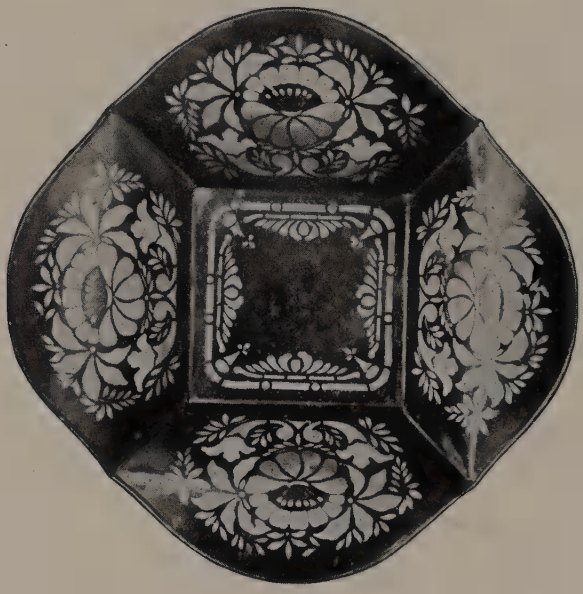
knee of fair knighthood. From these dignified dynasties my simple stencils can claim only distant descent, and yet they are so attractive, so full of vigor and stamina and with such wonderful decorative possibilities, that I am sure you will love them as I do, once you know them. I cannot think of a better way to bring tone and the quality of color into a room than by their use.

I am going to begin by walking directly to my sideboard, and taking down my little canister, black-surfaced, straight-lined, and not more than five inches in height, but, oh, so delightful! It has two compartments, one for green tea, one for black, and a tiny lock, for, in those thrifty days, our ancestors had to be very careful indeed of their precious Oolong and Japan. A brass lion's head forms the handle, thus marking it beyond doubt as belonging to the full Empire period; and the stencil itself makes me think of the old nursery rhyme about the nut tree "that would nothing bear but a silver apple and a golden pear" — my design in silvers and golds precisely. Why, I am almost daily expecting a visit from the Queen of Spain's daughter "all on account of my little nut tree." And my tea-caddy has something more than quaint charm to recommend it; the color-scheme of golds and silvers has the merit of binding together the pewter on my sideboard and the brass on the table beyond.

On my dining-table is another interesting piece,

A stenciled tea caddy owned by the author. A lion's head forms the handle.

Tray with original stenciling.
Collection of Mrs. Carleton.



Stenciled fruit-dish in blues and roses, with gold and silver arabesques. *From the collection of the author.*

this time combining more colors. The background is black, the heavy, japanned black that takes long years and rough usage to wear away; on the four curved-over edges are alternate designs of blue and rose conventionalized flowers set in a wreath pattern of gilt and silver, and the stencil on the bottom is plain gold. It is quite twelve inches wide and the photograph gives no real idea of its capacity, for it will hold nearly a dozen smallish oranges. It is in almost "proof" condition; the colors are merely dulled by time, not rubbed away, and because there are so many combinations of tone in it, it makes a most admirable fruit-dish, harmonizing with anything: oranges, golden-red plums, or crimson-hued peaches and apples. Many such dishes are still to be found through the countryside; sometimes the design is completely worn away, in which case a piece of this kind seems to me practically worthless, and I should not advise redecoration. At other times, the colors are warm and glowing; desirable bits to be picked up both for decoration and actual use.

I wish that I could show you the stencil on the columns and cornice of my Empire clock, but it is so dim that, although the effect is yet very pleasing to the eye, any adequate reproduction is impossible. Still, bear my counsel in mind, and, if you ever find a clock with stenciled pillars and cornice, remember that it is worth buying.

I have chosen four standard types of chairs to show

you, all excellent of their kind. The first has a charming decoration of gold, with little, naïve flecks of green and red picking out the pattern; an unusual touch comes in the turning and stenciling of the brace, and, most valuable point of all, there is a lion's head inset like a medallion in the top of the back. The seat is round, another excellence. Altogether, it is one of the most desirable stenciled chairs that I have ever seen. The design when it was found was so dulled that it had to be done over, but the reproduction has not a flaw. The next chair is completely old — you will see that the stencil is dimmer — but the gold fruit and flowers on the black background are very agreeable to look at. The seat is the square rush, more common than the rounded one, but still well worth while. The third chair is the most delicately shaped of all; notice how charmingly turned the legs and brace are. You will see, too, that the finish is light; in this resembling the Adam style in satinwood, and the decoration, redone twenty years ago, is formed by clusters of golden grapes. The fourth chair has been restenciled recently, but in shape is the style of rocking-chair that was made between 1820 and 1830, as both the form of the rockers and the inset cane-seat indicate. Cane was used for seating the later types, and, while rush is preferable to anything else, I have frequently found such chairs with splint bottoms.

Trays you will find almost as often as chairs, and

FOUR CHAIRS SHOWING INTERESTING STENCILS

A GROUP OF INTERESTING STENCIL TRAYS

they vary from small ones, such as are shown in the photograph grouping four together, to great salvers, very useful and very decorative. Sometimes the trays have an irregular, fluted, "pie-crust" edge like the two on either side of the large tray. The upper one is more of the usual shape, but it is redeemed by the brilliance of its decoration, a bird of paradise nestling in unknown and luxuriant flowers. The large tray (on page 19) is a beautiful one; of most unusual design, too, with vivid flowers on gold bands that glow with a happy radiance. I wonder if you will like the one with the swans as much as I do? And G—— has another just like it, only bigger. Frankly, I think it is lovely. I find myself envying the fortunate bride who went to housekeeping somewhere in the early eighteen-hundreds with these charming trays to keep her company. There must have been three of them at first, — "nests" of trays they were called, — and how I wish I could find that other wandering lost one! Those dear, queer, conventional swans on a blue pond in front of a little thatched cottage! If you could look at the trays themselves, you would see that the windows have the tiny panes that such a cottage should have, and that immense sunflowers form a floral background.

"Gorgeous" is the adjective that was meant to describe the next tray. It is perfectly preserved; it might have been finished an hour ago as it stands

there in its fresh black and gold livery, except that they do not make such lovely things nowadays. It belonged to the great-grandmother of a friend of mine, and her descendant, owning it, is a happy woman. The way the stencil is applied, covering as it does nearly the whole surface, adds to its rarity.

I thought it the most attractive one I had ever seen until D—— and I found this lovely last one (on page 28) in a little dingy antique shop where treasures are often to be picked up. I didn't believe that such things existed, and I stood holding it in my hands and wondering. To begin with, it is very large, its oval shape is quite uncommon, and, best of all, it has a stenciled rim. There is not an imperfection in it, and the colors are simply exquisite, browns — I never saw a brown tray before — decorated in golds with little touches of crimson. It is a piece to marvel at, almost to worship.

All through my descriptions I have said "stenciled," not "painted" furniture, and with the best of reasons back of my statement, because the early nineteenth-century pieces, these honest, sturdy chairs and trays and dishes, were decorated by the process of stenciling. I have seen just one painted tray, interesting because it interprets so primitively the story of Jacob and Rebecca, but nowhere nearly so attractive or artistically good as the ones with the formalized patterns. I do wish the modern decorators would return to the good old paths. Now the

Black-and-gold stenciled tray. *Collection of Mrs. Woods.*

The finest tray I have ever seen, with the rim as well as the tray surface stenciled. *Collection of Mrs. Carr.*

process is free-hand, though sometimes the design is traced on oiled paper, then filled in with chalk and so transferred to a chair-back that way. Twentieth-century painted furniture is often pretty, but it rarely suggests the "feeling" of a hundred years ago.

In mid-August it was my privilege to talk to a man who has spent nearly all his life — and he is ninety-one years old — in decorating furniture, and who probably knows more about it than any other living soul. Shall I ever forget the day of my pilgrimage? He lived miles away; the "noonday stood still for heat," and the road stretched, a dusty ribbon, ahead of me. And then at last the little welcoming white cottage, smaller than mine, and older, for it dates back to 1768. Even the green-latticed sheds built long out at the side looked as if, friendly, they had caught hold of hands with the house, and were running down the little slope to meet me. It was cool, so cool, inside, so pleasant to sit there with Mr. Ingalls — he is the "rosy-apple" type of old man — and discuss stencils while the day blazed outside. When he was a lad he had learned the trade from his father who was a coach-painter, and at that time they worked entirely with stencils; he remembered the piles that used to lie in his father's shop. Little by little they were broken and destroyed, and at last the old order changed for something different and not so intrinsically good. Nobody works with stencils now; the color has remained but the "feeling,"

the "soul," has vanished. Still, I think it is a craft that could as well be revived as the weaving of blankets and coverlets and rugs.[1]

Perhaps, all this time, you are thinking, "But, nevertheless, it is just peasant furniture, the product of homely workmanship." And so it is, and it would be more wonderful, undoubtedly, to own a splendid, authentic bit of *vernis-Martin*, or such a red-lacquer cabinet as Anne Douglas Sedgwick describes in her delicately modulated "White Pagoda." And yet I am thinking that so many of you must be, like me, living in "middling" houses on "middling" incomes, and wanting things pretty — and real! Fancy how charming you could make a cold, north-exposed breakfast-room with the yellow glitter of brass, warm brownish walls, and gold-brown stenciled furniture weaving the colors together into a unit of comfort. Or think of the appropriate prettiness of sprigged china and pink lustre on an old tea-tray, its tones as exquisitely mellowed as theirs. Remember, too, that "the love of the genuine is a very healthy human instinct." I know nothing that has more of this quality than the simple, honest, unpretending stenciled furniture of the early nineteenth century.

[1] Fortunately, the craft *is* being revived.

III

PRESSED GLASSWARE

Perhaps if I had n't bought my "five-cent sugar-bowls" at that Vermont auction I never would have begun to collect pressed glass, and so become interested in one of the most genuine, attractive — a little naïve, too — American industries of the early nineteenth century. And then this article would never have been written, for, you see, I had n't intended to buy them at all. What my soul was craving was a delicate Spode cup lying all unnoticed among the rubbish of an "odd lot." Apparently I was its sole discoverer; when it was put up for sale, I said "five cents," not another bid was made, and as I stopped to examine my china treasure, I found that I had been even luckier than I thought, for the two quaint sugar-bowls were oddly charming, and grew more so every time I looked at them.

My white glass candlesticks (on page 33) came next in order of purchase. Discovered at a little hillside auction in New Hampshire, I bought them for a dollar and a half. I have never seen any quite like this pair, with their clear, white curves, rounding bases, and pewter sockets to hold the candles, the last a most unusual touch. Now they stand on my Empire sideboard, just the right lighting arrangement, for the silverish sockets are in tone with the pewter

on the wide mahogany top, and the glass matches the pressed handles of the sideboard. The dolphin candlesticks — a much more recent acquisition — are an even stronger Empire note, for you must remember that the Empire period meant the revival of antiquity in furniture, and that the dolphin was used as a constant classic symbol in decoration. These candlesticks are not white, but as yellow as if they had been cut from a block of clear amber; and if you are gracious enough to recall the color-scheme of my dining-room, you will realize how harmonious they must be on the mantelpiece against that gray-greeny-brown background.

But, even after my first candlesticks, I don't think I quite took my glass-collecting as a serious art, a quest to scour the countryside for, until in a little, old attic, hidden away in a dusty blue bowl, I found three "Benjamin Franklin" cup-plates. I knew that they were cup-plates because they were just the same shape and size as the dark-blue "Cadmus" design, which a dealer had just told me was worth twenty-five dollars. But that these odd little glass plates, which our prudent grandmothers used to set their cups in when they drank their tea from the saucers, had any particular value, I was utterly unaware. Remember, I was very young at the game, and when they were offered to me at ten cents apiece, why, I took them. No, my conscience does n't prick me a bit; I was a mere child at collecting in those days.

The two sugar bowls were thrown in with a five-cent teacup at an auction. Several of the other pieces show classic decoration.

Rare pressed-glass candlesticks. The two outer ones are white glass with pewter sockets, the other two, in the dolphin design, are made of amber glass. *Both groups from the author's collection.*

Stamped Eagle, Unstamped Eagle, Fort Meigs, Log Cabin.

Log Cabin with Cider Barrel and Flag, Benjamin Harrison, Henry Clay.

Bunker Hill with draped border, Bunker Hill (plain) with braided border, Bunker Hill with braided border.

The Benjamin Franklin, Chancellor Livingston, Ship Cadmus.

HISTORIC CUP-PLATES

From the author's collection.

And then, by some chance, I ran across Edwin A. Barber's book on "American Glassware," and found that my "Benjamin Franklins" were among the rarest of a lot of historical cup-plates. Let me quote this great authority directly: "These interesting little objects were pressed in metal moulds by means of a plunger. It is believed that they were made in England since we have no knowledge that pressed-glass designs of this character were produced so early in this country." Then followed a long list, and my fired ambition made me unable to rest until I, too, owned all these cup-plates.

Sit down beside me on the sofa, won't you, and let me tell you about them in their order; for "these interesting little objects," as Professor Barber calls them, collected here and there through Vermont and New Hampshire and Massachusetts, and costing, perhaps, ten or twelve dollars, are worth to-day fifty by a dealer's estimate.

I am beginning with the "Stamped Eagle," because it is the oldest cup-plate of all, dated — you can see the figures faintly — 1831. A shield is embossed on the eagle's breast, and overhead is a circle of stars, the border being a conventional leaf and fleur-de-lis design. The "Unstamped Eagle" comes next, set in a scroll border, and clasping defiant arrows; you almost expect to find the militant "E Pluribus Unum" stamped underneath as you frequently see it in the bureau brasses. I am particularly proud

of this cup-plate because I have never seen it in any collection but my own, and I think it is undoubtedly rare. My third trophy, acorn-bordered, bears as central design a solidly square log-cabin, with the words "Tippecanoe" and "Fort Meigs" printed above it.

The next cup-plate — usually described by dealers and catalogues as "The Log Cabin with the Flag and Cider Barrell" — is my most cherished little dish, probably because it was so hard to get and eluded me so long. I had pursued its veriest shadow, and, for an eternity, the most tangible evidence that I could find that it existed for me was one with a nibble as large as the Hatter made in his teacup, bitten out at the edge. And then I saw it advertised in Libbie's auction-list, and I shaped my life accordingly. It was the last day of the sale, and I hurried through a luncheon-party, I gave up the gilded chance of hearing Yvette Guilbert sing her "Noels," and I sat and sat in that crowded auction-room until my blessed cup-plate was announced. For me the meantime is a blank; Syntax plates and Bennington dogs, even Sunderland lustre creamers, passed unnoticed. If any of you ever saw that engaging French farce done over into a musical comedy and called "The Pink Lady," — saw and recall the part where M. Dondiddier, the antique dealer, is told that the twentieth snuff-box has been found, — you will understand my emotions. They were as his when the missing

cup-plate was put into my trembling hands. And I have a curious theory about this piece. I think that it may have been "made in America," for a rubbing from a medal on the fly-leaf of an old school-book shows precisely the same design, and the inscription above reads "Free Soil School," below "The Hero of Tippecanoe." I think, too, that it must have been a characteristic American illustration of the time. A logical fifth is the "Hero" himself, a profile portrait of Harrison, with the date of his birth, 1773, and the date of his presidency, 1841. Henry Clay is on the sixth cup-plate; a small head with a much more elaborated border than most of these patterns show, and, as it has been said, the head might be almost anybody, Julius Cæsar, for instance, it is so conventionally classical.

The row below shows at the right the three Bunker Hill plates; all more or less alike to the layman, all blessedly different to the collector, and one of them, the third, remarkably hard to get. The first three are my cherished ships; two those early "Walk-in-the-Water" boats, the Benjamin Franklin and the Chancellor Livingston. They were among the first Hudson River steamers; do you suppose it was that same Franklin that was "snagged at St. Genevieve in 1822"? The Chancellor Livingston, named for one of the drafters of the Constitution, a thorough-going friend and patron of Fulton in his navigation projects, is shown, also, by Enoch Wood on

one of his blue platters, but I like mine better. As it sails to its horizon of stars and hearts it is the statelier ship. The last of these cup-plates is called the "Cadmus"; why, I do not know.* Like Henry Clay, it might be anything.

The other four are not in any sense historical, but I am showing them to you because they are such standard patterns; the Valentine and the Butterfly being particularly well known. Of the leaf-border design I have six, and let me give you a hint if you, too, have half a dozen. They make the most attractive individual almond dishes in the world.

And mine are all in the white glass, a fairly wise limiting, you see, for these cup-plates are also made in deep sapphire blues, emerald greens, topaz yellows, and, to continue this jeweled comparison, opal-hued effects. But while such variety is excellent as showing range, and most desirable in a museum, I really think the white more charming for intimate and private use. Yet, as I write with such composure, I am envying, and I can't help it, a friend who, going out to buy a bureau, not only captured it, but secured besides a lovely and lambent blue Chancellor Livingston for twenty-five cents.

Long before I had collected all these cup-plates I had decided that modern cut-glass was showy and rather vulgar, quite out of place in my demure little eighteenth-century cottage. I may have been helped to this conclusion by many maids, optimistic washers

*Note. Now I *do* know. The Cadmus cup-plate is probably commemorative of Lafayette's second visit to America in 1824–1825. On one of the earliest salt-cellars made at Sandwich in 1825 the ship design alternating with an eagle is used, and this is a definite Lafayette piece.

A group of cup-plates with a compote in centre.

The compote is from Mrs. Dickerman's collection; the cup-plates from the author's.

Collection of Mrs. Dickerman.

Two lacy-patterned plates and a sugar-bowl, creamer, and covered salt.

From the author's collection.

A group of salt-cellars. The upper two are decorated almost in the feeling of the Sheffield grape design. Some of the designs are like magnified snow-flakes.

of dishes, who broke nearly all my wedding presents. When I surveyed the ruins, I made up my mind that I would never buy any more, but collect instead this early pressed glass, and, as our professorial purse grew more ample, add Stiegel and etched glass and that rare old Waterford to this foundation. You can see that I have been blessed; my friends give pressed glass to me; people bring it to sell to me, and now I have over fifty pieces, and more to come; a lovely set way out in the country just waiting for me to go for it; and I am pursuing a Washington plate and a cake-basket.

My salt-cellars are charming, don't you think? The upper pair are decorated almost in the feeling of the Sheffield grape-design, and the lower outer pair somewhat resemble a Louis Seize set in silver that my sister found at the rag-fair in Paris. Some of the designs are fine enough to be almost like magnified snow-flakes: the little individual salt-cellar and tiny plate at the left in the large group are like that. My cake-dish is somewhat coarser in texture, but it still suggests, in its strawberry-and-thistle design, the names invariably given to this glassware: "lace," which explains itself, and "snake" from the stippled effect resembling a snake's skin.

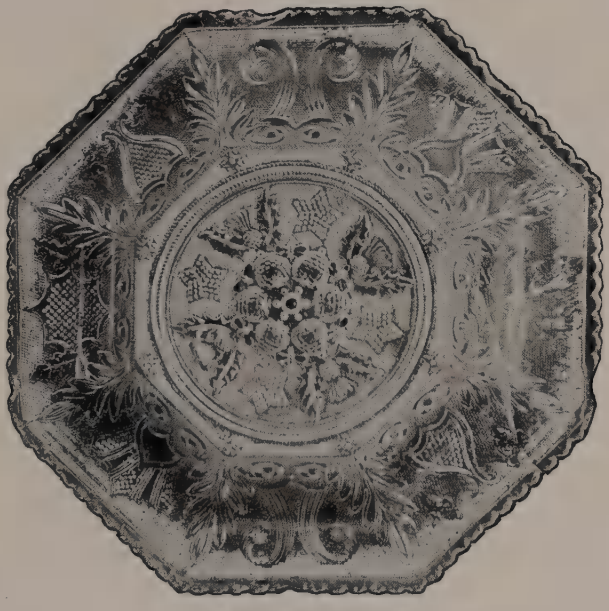
Perhaps the two rarest pieces are the oval dish with handles, and the jar with the delicate tracery of landscape medallions and a diamonded base that makes you think of that Stiegel-looking glass made in

Southern New Hampshire. The platter — it is about ten inches long — belongs to the full "Tippecanoe" period, and, in my experience, is almost unique. The handles are of ground glass and represent sleeping deer; and, if you look closely at the centre, ground-glass, too, you will see that the Wild West, as America then understood it, is there depicted: mountains in the distance, a log-cabin, fleeing deer and buffalo. The jar, perhaps, has more artistic charm, but the platter out-values it in naïve unusualness.

I cannot go into the definite details of each treasure, but I do hope that you can trace on the larger pieces the really classic designs, set in medallions almost Adam in effect: a blowsy Venus leading a chubby Cupid, — that 's on the wide-mouthed vase, — and on the jam-jar (on page 33) such a stern Minerva! They, too, carry on the feeling of antiquity as expressed in the Empire period.

The full-blown Goddess of Love also reminds me of one of my smaller collecting tragedies, too tiny, perhaps, to be called anything but a grief, but still real. Only in one little hillside town have I found this particular pattern, and I think it must have existed once early in the nineteenth century as a complete set. Three pieces were already mine, and the fourth, a large cake-plate, had been promised me if the owner ever broke up housekeeping and went away. And then, by night, stealthily she fled, taking with her my cherished dish, and my Collector's Paradise was tem-

Collection of Mrs. Whitney.



From the author's collection.

PLATTER AND CAKE-DISH

Sauce dishes, a child's mug, and two tiny pieces of an individual set. All of us, who have reached a certain age, can remember similar pieces of glassware on our grandmother's table.

porarily topsy-turvy. You know how you can *want* things! I am not a bit ashamed to tell you that it took all my Christian fortitude not to hope it would get broken.

Will you like my glass as well as you did my stencils, I wonder? After all, it has much the same feeling — that "folk feeling" of the early nineteenth century, full of vigor and stamina. It may not merit the term "beautiful," but surely it is quaintly pretty and engaging. Besides, as yet it has not been imitated, and it is still fairly easy to acquire — two distinct blessings. And more than all this, these pieces of pressed glass are the fragile symbols of our stirring thirties and forties, and, as such, worthy a place in any collection of Americana.

NOTE. — Since writing this article, I have found twelve other historical glass cup-plates: two variants of the Henry Clay pattern; two other Hudson River boats, the "Frigate Constitution" and the "Fulton Steamboat," both with octagonal edges; two more Log Cabins, General Ringold of Palo Alto fame; and five more eagles. And my "made in America" theory has been thoroughly proved; for further investigation shows these historical glass cup-plates to have been pressed at Sandwich, Massachusetts, early in the nineteenth century.

IV

OLD WOVEN COVERLETS

To-day I have been very happy, and what do you think I have been doing? Mending an old coverlet; a coverlet woven, it is said, before this country of ours was a nation, and bearing out tradition by its linen warp overshot with blue and red wools blended together in an intricate tracery of design. Darning, always a pleasantly monotonous domestic task, becomes apotheosized, glorified, when the fabric you are working on is in itself beautiful. That was part of my joy.

The rest was the way the years rolled back, and placed me in such close kinship with the long-ago ancestress by marriage who wove this wonderful web in the eighteenth-century Lowlands. For the coverlet is Scotch; brought to America in the wedding-chest of a bride who married into a Dutch family "up state" in New York, when its name was changed to "spree," and it became part of the everydayness of existence like the more ordinary blue and white coverlets woven here. What happy chance preserved it to me? I do not know. Certainly it was used, not locked away in a chest as so many coverlets we find to-day have been. And of course I know the reason that it is directly mine, for, years ago, when he was a little lad, O—— decided that the

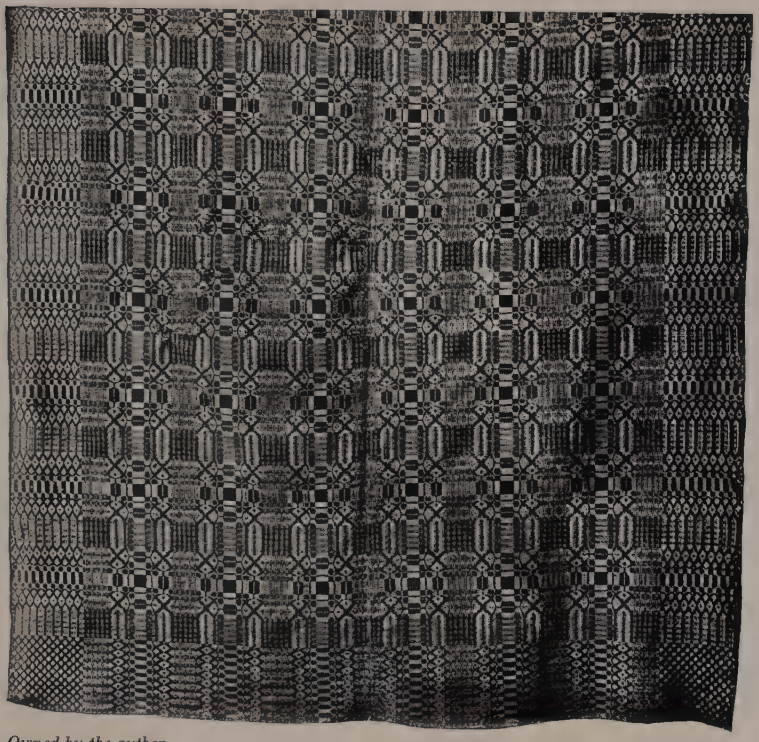
engaging reds and blues would look well on his nursery bed, and claimed for his own the "Scotch blanket," now returned to its rightful name. Can a man be said to have a dowry? Well, I know that among many other excellent things I married the stencil clock, the graceful Empire table in my dining-room, and this quaint, desirable old coverlet. You see how very strong, how well-woven, it must have been, to defy time and moths and a small boy's wear and tear. And at first I only half appreciated it; I knew it was a woven coverlet; I knew it was old; I referred to it casually as "the brick pattern" because a dealer had once so described it. Dealers have so many fallacies — Martha Washington tables, and so on. I used it as a couch-cover; I hung it up for a portière, never once valuing the jeweled beauty that makes it as lovely as a glowing Bokhara rug.

And then Eliza Calvert Hall's "Book of Hand-Woven Coverlets" swam into my ken, and my eyes no longer were holden. I sat, exultant, upon a peak in Darien. I am not at all ashamed of my ignorance, it is so rapidly changing into intelligent information; and, besides, nobody can properly understand or really "see" coverlets until they have read this book, this wonderful, radiant, *marching* book. Why, you 'd know that the woman who wrote it believed in other women, rejoiced in the earnest beauty of their work, even if you had never read "Aunt Jane of Kentucky."

It is almost as if she had woven a lyric out of these mountain-women's lives.

Well, the first thing that I did after I had looked at the illustrations, and dipped here and there into its pages of enchantment, was to run upstairs for my coverlet, then in the temporary seclusion of moth-balls. I brought it down and draped it across my Empire sofa, and it lighted up the room! Had I been blind? Here was a wonderful, gorgeous fabric, a design that lingered between "King's Flower" and "Governor's Garden," and yet was more subtle, more intricate than either. Patterns shaped themselves before my eyes: chariot-wheels, squares, octagons, oblongs, and quaint heraldic devices that looked like halberds, blended and wove themselves into each other. I can't give you any better comparison than this: it is the way you look at the night-sky before you know the constellations. At first it 's just a tangle of stars; and then, when you learn them, all heaven itself falls into patterns. You must forgive my rhapsodies; it is the oldest coverlet that I have ever seen, and one of the loveliest. It has been joy to work on it; restoring the time-marred places by the skill of weaving my needle in and out. And, while I darned, the song from "Paracelsus" hummed itself through my mind: —

> From closet long to quiet vowed
> With mothed and dropping arras hung,
> Mouldering her lute and books among
> As when a queen, long dead, was young.



Owned by the author.

The oldest coverlet of all. An earlier variety of "Governor's Garden." Linen warp overshot with blue and red wool. Dates from the eighteenth century.

From the author's collection.

The "red, white, and blue" coverlet, woven in the early nineteenth century, and a variant of the "Snowball" design.

Though, thank goodness, it is n't quite so fragile as that; I mean it gives you in some way the same magic distance of time. And other people feel it, too, I think. When the coverlets were at the studio posing for their pictures I heard the photographers saying, — my "Tennessee Trouble" coverlet was then on the screen, — "Look pleasant, please," and, "After all, the expression is everything," and I believed that my coverlet's loveliness was wasted on these frivolous men. Then the "Scotch blanket" was hung up to have its likeness taken, and one of them said, quite without suggestion, "That's an effective pattern." I stopped long enough to play my favorite game. "What design do you first see, the one you are conscious of when you look at it?" I asked. "It's like a checker-board," he answered, laughing a little; and then, growing suddenly serious, "No, it really makes me think of some of those old Egyptian tapestries." My faith was vindicated for, you see, the verse from "Paracelsus" begins

> And strew faint sweetness from some old
> Egyptian's fine, worm-eaten shroud.

Never again shall the "Scotch blanket" serve as portière or couch-cover, but, because I hate unused things, things locked away in chests, I will hang it, a glowing, happy banner on our study walls.

Perhaps I ought to be even more ashamed about not recognizing my "Tennessee Trouble," for that

came, you know, from my own family. I knew it was an old woven coverlet, and that it must be rare because it was white, — coverlets in this respect being something like blackbirds; but not until I studied Mrs. Hall's book, and watched the patterns reveal themselves, did I realize that this century-old coverlet, woven in East Tennessee by my great-grandmother's slaves, was a variant of the design known as "Tennessee Trouble." I am sorry that I cannot show it to you, white fringe and all, but the pattern, charming as it is, is too flat to photograph well in the one color. It is in perfect preservation, and another excellence is its warmth; woven in the South, it shuts out the chill of a New England winter as I have never known any quilt or comforter to do.

I am, also, the happy owner of a third coverlet, soft and warm and woven in three colors, an unusual and very charming effect. This has no family associations; I bought it last fall way up in Vermont, at a little white farmhouse on the top of the world. Below were mists, and the hillsides flamed with maples. I had just found a little stenciled footstool for fifty cents, — rare! why, I never even heard of one before, — and then the nice old farmer brought out this lovely thing, this coverlet as full of color as the autumn outside, and said, "Anybody give me three dollars for this spread?" I answered, "I will," so quick that I don't know how I did it; and, as he passed it over to me he said, "A lady was by here

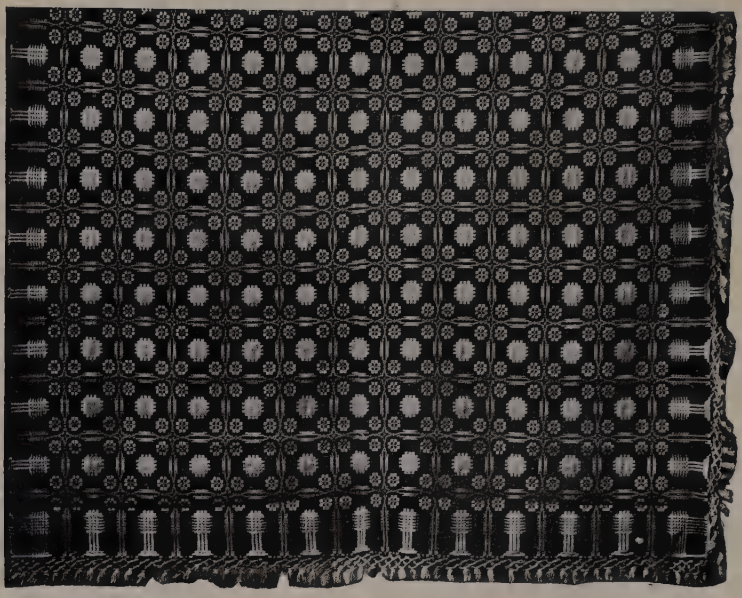
last week, and she offered me two dollars for it, but I sort of thought I ought to get three." A dollar apiece, you see, for each color, for the red and white and blue that go to make up my coverlet. Don't be too sorry for the farmer; don't fancy the old homestead mortgaged and me an avaricious collector. He really had more money than I; it was merely that we expressed our expenditures differently.

The design I cannot quite identify, though it seems to me similar to the various "snowball" patterns. Except for two or three tiny time-worn places it is in excellent condition; and the colors, how shall I make you see them? White, a creamy tone, the blue dark, and the red not red at all but a coral pink, the color that Mrs. Hall describes as "just hesitating between scarlet and rose." That 's my despair in writing this: I can show you designs; I cannot reveal the colors to you, these marvelous home-made dyes that have lasted and will last as long as a shred of the fabric does. That is why I urge you to save every scrap of each coverlet you find, for in no other way can you get such perfect results in mending as by using the old threads. I like to think that this coverlet of mine was woven when our country was still young enough to care very greatly for the symbolism of these three blended colors, and that it was kept gently so that it might in time come to me to be a couch-cover by day; at night to tuck snugly round the Littlest Daughter.

If I could show you color; if I could turn my pen for the moment into a paint-brush, I could let you see what I reckon the most beautiful of all the coverlets I have ever beheld. It, too, is coral pink, that wonderful, lighting rose that I have just tried to describe to you. It is double-woven, a beautiful piece of workmanship, dated 1836, and signed with the name H. N. Green, three points that contribute to its rarity. The signature might mean either the name of the person for whom it was woven or the name of the weaver himself, the latter more likely, for this double-weaving was usually done by professionals, men who traveled the countryside, and brought with them when they came new patterns and tales of the world without. In just the same way the majestic lions in the corners and the American eagles and stars may indicate that the work was done by an Englishman who took this way of binding his old and new homes together. Notice the formalized border. Did you ever see anything more delightful than those conventional trees with the little posing monkeys underneath? Such weaving is masterwork; and here it is interesting to quote what Alice Morse Earle has to say about coverlets like this, "The 'setting-up' of such a design is entirely beyond my skill as a weaver to explain or even comprehend. But it is evident that the border must have been woven by taking up a single warp-thread at a time, with a wire needle, not by passing a shuttle, as it is far too complicated and

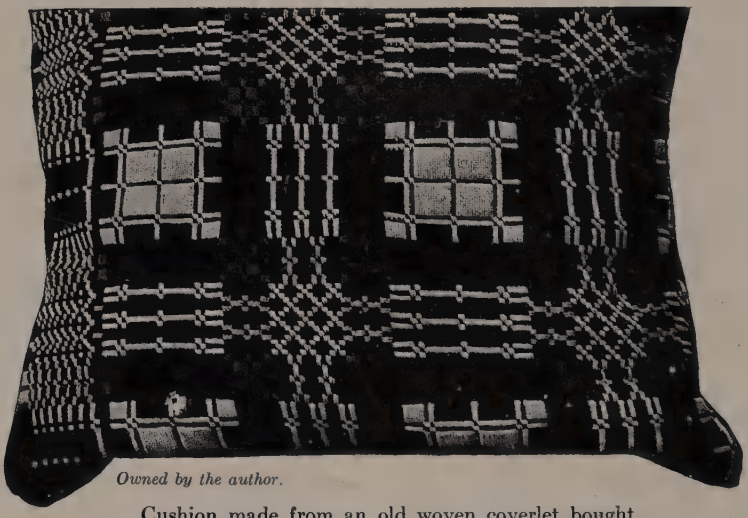
Owned by Mrs. Jarvis.

Double-woven coverlet in rose and white; dated and very rare. This is the most beautiful old coverlet that I have ever seen.



Owned by Mrs. Wells.

Double-woven coverlet in dark blue and white, done in the early nineteenth century by Lucy Bingham. The design is the "Lover's Chain."



Owned by the author.

Cushion made from an old woven coverlet bought in the Blue Ridge Mountains. Design, "Lover's Knot"; colors, dark blue, pinkish écru, and orange.

varied for any treadle-harness to be able to make a shed for a shuttle." I think that the coverlet design is older in feeling than the actual date; it is really full of the Empire feeling. That 's why it is going to look so lovely on an old acanthus carved four-poster that came from a James River plantation.

The "Lover's Chain" — a variant of "Lover's Knot" — is double-woven, too, and as attractive in its fresh blue and white finery as on the day when it was first made. As the old people hereabouts say, "there 's not a brack in it." Aside from the beauty of its design, the charm of its quaint, formalized tree-border, it is very wonderful to me because it was done by a woman, and this double-weaving was usually a man's task, considered too hard and intricate for the weaker sex to accomplish. But this woman could and did, this little valiant-souled, indomitable Lucy Bingham, who lived a century ago somewhere in upper New York State. It is related of her that once, when washing storm-windows, she slipped and broke a rib, and, after the doctor had bound up her injuries, she insisted on beginning the washing all over again because she was n't quite certain just where she left off. Do you wonder that such a fiery spirit could do double-weaving as easily and well as a man?

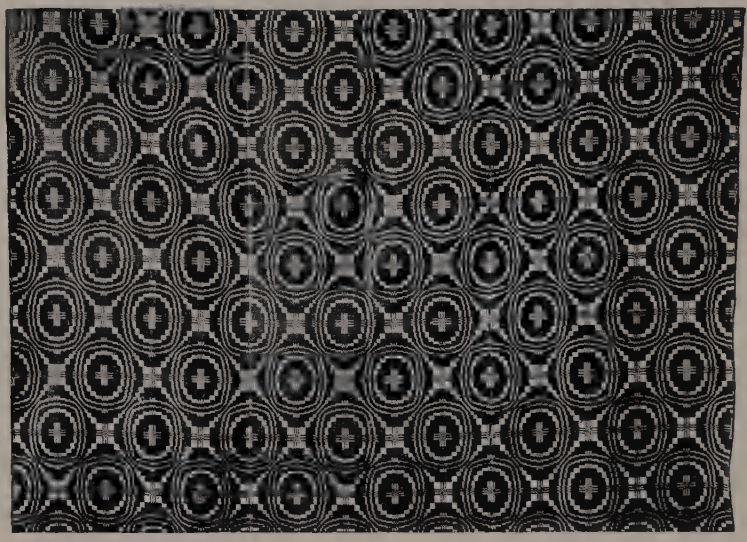
My third and last woven coverlet (on page 59) is the most interesting historically of the three: it was made in America in those vibrant, jingoistic forties, when our country was burning to express herself.

The weaving is a marvel; the color that beautiful, subtle blue which has the depths of the ocean in it. The central design is like English tapestry, while the border resembles the coverlet known as "The Declaration of Independence." There is more printing than one usually sees on such pieces: Washington in each corner with the patriotic motto, and the repeated, invincible slogan, "Under this we prosper." Then, too, the signature, "J. Cunningham, Weaver, N. Hartford, Oneida County, N. York," is one that I have never before seen recorded. Altogether it is a most unusual and valuable piece.

Blues and whites are the commoner color expression in these coverlets, but there is such variety of tones and designs in them that you may have many such, and never once repeat your pattern or shade. For instance (on page 60), the "Single Chariot Wheel" design, the variant of a most primitive *motif*, is a soft old blue, a watchet blue, the color of the eyes of Elia's Alice, and, lovelier, to my way of thinking, than the deeper hues. And yet there is such stamina, such vigor in the indigo and white "Cross" coverlet, that it, too, seems wholly desirable.

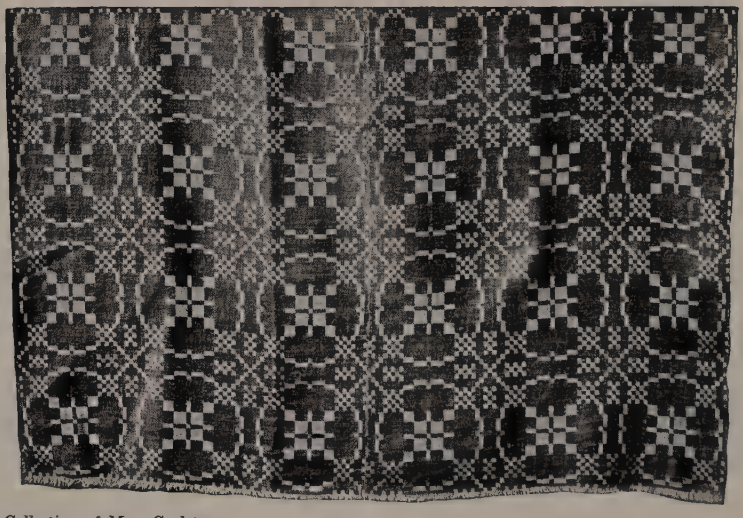
Don't you like the pattern of my cushion-cover? (Shown on page 56.) That's the real "Lover's Knot," woven long ago in the Blue Ridge country. Of all designs the "Lover's Knot" seems to me best and loveliest: clear-cut, decided, beautiful. Part of the pattern, time has worn away, but the colors are still

Double-woven coverlet in blue and white; dated and signed, and an unique piece. "The Declaration of Independence" pattern.



Owned by Mrs. Jarvis.

The design of this dark blue and white coverlet is called " The Cross." There is much variety of tones and designs in these coverlets.



Collection of Mrs. Carleton.

"Single Chariot Wheel" design in old blue and white. This design is a variant of a most primitive *motif*, and the blue is a soft old blue.

fresh and unfaded: the background a deep, dark blue, the *motifs* a pinkish écru and a queer, tawny orange.

These are all the designs that I have to show you, but, of course, I could go on unendingly. So many of these coverlets have been woven by simple, loving, long-ago hands! Do you realize that Mrs. Hall records the names of nearly three hundred and fifty different designs? That alone shows how the country-women of America tried to express beauty — tried and succeeded, and left these woven patterns of their lives for us to wonder at. From New England they came and New York, from the South and the early Middle West, these coverlets that meant a year of a woman's life from first flax-sowing to final weaving; these marvelous blues, these magic roses, these gentle browns and greens. And you find them everywhere, in the most astonishing places, if only you will take the trouble to look. One, for example, a rare piece of double-weaving of the Greek vase design, has just moved away from our town into Vermont. I never knew it was there until it had gone; and it had taken prizes and prizes at county fairs, I am told! Do you know, I never before realized that the proud owners put them on exhibition; but of course they must have, just as they do patchwork quilts to-day. And there is another coverlet carefully locked away in the local bank, but that I shall investigate before it escapes me. I have seen them used as careless covers on swinging hammocks, on

ironing-boards, for chair-seats, even as the patching for an old carpet. See how many of them you can rescue; you could n't find a worthier work. I have yet to discover the woman to whom these old woven bits of beauty do not appeal. "When Adam delved and Eve span," you know. Well, apparently all of Eve's daughters have inherited their mother's tastes.

V

LUSTRE PITCHERS AND TEACUPS

Are n't they dear? Don't you love them? I do, and yet none of them are mine; they are all L——'s, and I admire them almost enough to break the tenth commandment, but not quite, for envy scourges the soul, and if you cannot collect without it, then you will do very well to leave collecting alone.

Now I might make this little article a didactic treatise on lustre wares; inform you that they were made by the early Persians; that wonderful lustrous pottery was known to Spain in the Middle Ages; that John Hancock, a Staffordshire potter, rediscovered the lost process in 1769 while working for Josiah Spode; and that the more famous Josiah Wedgwood himself experimented with it later in the eighteenth century. All this I might discuss in detail, but, you see, I want to tell you about these especial pieces, and mingle fact with description as I go along, just stopping to name over the list of lustres for you: ruby, gold, copper, bronzed purple, lilac, pink, steel, silver, stenciling, and resist lustre.

The lovely silver resist pitcher first in the group on page 67 is one of L——'s heirlooms, having belonged to her great-great-grandmother. Sentimental considerations apart, it is very desirable, being quite five and a half inches tall, of quart capacity, in

"proof" condition, and excellently decorated. Here I am breaking my promise and being pedagogical, quoting a definition of "resist" and "stenciled" lustre because I find that so few people know them apart. "The term 'resist' is derived from the method adopted in order to secure a white pattern or one of another color, such as blue, canary, etc., on a silver or copper lustrous ground. A white surface or one of the other shades (there are specimens with more than one ground shade) is first laid on the clay body, the outline is painted or stenciled on with a substance such as glycerine, or some other preparation which would quickly become detached in water. The whole pattern is lustred over with the metallic solution, and allowed partly to dry. The ware is next washed in water, whereupon the glycerine preparation covering the outline or pattern washes off, but the metallic solution is not affected by the bath, or, in other words, it 'resists' the water." The ware is next fired, to complete the process. This method uses much more of the lustre, and would doubtless occupy more time to accomplish than the process of stenciling, and it explains in a measure why fine resist examples are expensive to procure. On the other hand, it must not be overlooked that certain varieties of lustre treated with fine stenciled designs are also difficult to purchase. It will be noticed that the stencil leaves a lustre pattern on the prepared ground, while the resist process leaves a white or

blue pattern on a gold or silver self-ground, according to the kind of metallic glaze employed.

Can you see how charming the next pitcher is? This type is called Leeds Lustre, — if you ever go to the Antiquarian Rooms at Concord, Massachusetts, you will find a piece almost absolutely its mate, — and the body is cream and of that ridged ware so connected with the English city that gives it its name. There are three "house" designs set in medallions, and observe, please, how very like the shape of the one shown is to the old Fairbanks House at Dedham. Stripes of lustre divide the medallion designs, and a beaded line separates the rose pattern at the top from the lower part. These roses are slightly in relief, and the tone is a deep bronzed purple. More than a hundred years ago it came from Scotland overseas to Canada, where it was bought by a collecting cousin of L——'s. It is nearly as tall as the first pitcher, but its capacity is not so great.

The third pitcher is perhaps L——'s finest piece: quite six inches in height, of a clear copper, with the raised figures so much in the classic spirit that you feel as if it must at least have been made under the influence of Wedgwood, if it did not come directly from his potteries. The background is a soft blue, the color I like to think of as watchet blue, and there are five figures (six if you count the basket): a child kneeling with flowers; a woman standing with basket

on head; Cupid blowing a trumpet and riding on a queer écru-pink bull spotted with black; a kneeling woman; a girl holding a votive offering of garlands; and a large flower-basket. A range of six colors is employed in these figures: green, yellow, red, pink, dark blue, and black, and the whole feeling is full of charm. It came from Maine, from the little old house of a little old lady who lives on a point of land that juts down into one of the branches of the Kennebec River. I think that it must be a very alluring spot in more ways than one, for L—— says that there were, besides, old drawn-in rugs and black and gold mirrors and a most attractive Stiegel toddy-glass that belonged to the little old lady's great-great-grandfather.

Another pitcher with the same foundation color as this is the first one in the group that stands like "the great, big bear, and the middle-sized bear, and the little, wee bear." The blue, however, is a trifle duller and the texture of the paste somewhat less fine; but it is, nevertheless, filled with the same classic spirit, the band at the top being very like the grape-vine design on a Wedgwood sugar-bowl and creamer in my own collection. This suggestion is further accented by the use of the formalized sprays and acanthus leaves in copper lustre. The two smaller pitchers in this group are much less remarkable — the first, copper lustre with a green leaf and pink flower-pattern ever so slightly raised; the sec-

LUSTRE PITCHERS FROM L——'S COLLECTION

From Mrs. Carleton's collection.

Naïve bucolics in pink lustre.

From Mrs. Carleton's collection.

Very vigorous, yet very different types
of the bronzed tones.

ond, a tiny thing with just a broad band of plain green.

The raised figures on the next two pitchers have a very different effect, for, if the two others are classic odes of pottery, these are naïve bucolics in pink lustre, quaint hunting-scenes with a very rural air. The ground is a creamish-white that time has mellowed and yellowed a little. On the left-hand pitcher the slender tree-trunks of pink lustre support a heavy verdure; and pink lustre, too, are the droll mother-animal — we don't know quite what she is, but she looks like a llama — and her trotting baby. On the other side is a dotted pink lustre male with branching antlers, undoubtedly of the same species. The decoration below the lustre band at the top is quite different from any other that I have ever seen, a queer scroll design with green spot centres. This pitcher always makes me sad when I look at it, because it represents an auction that I did n't go to, an auction where there were mirrors and andirons and pewter; even a grandfather's clock that H—— found lying out in the grass, and that was sold for five dollars. The second pitcher shows huntsmen brave in pink lustre coats and gaiters, with polka-dot dogs in attendance; on the other side, more dogs and a kneeling hunter displaying a trophy of the chase — and this we think a rabbit, though its design is pink polka-dots like the dogs — to an old man with a gun, who resembles the local squire. A pink lustre hound's

head forms the end of the handle, and the border is the fairly conventional grape and leaf design. The heights of these pitchers are seven and six inches respectively.

I wish I could show more distinctly the colorings in the group of copper lustre pitchers below these on page 68. The first, eight inches in height, is seven-sided, the lustre unusually clear and intense, and the decorations pink and purple clusters of grapes and vivid green leaves. The second is a trifle darker and less lambent, with a two-and-a-half-inch green band stenciled with a copper design — a really uncommon effect. The third, seven inches tall, has a narrow upper band and a broad lower band of apricot yellow with a design stenciled in copper, too, and all three are very vigorous, yet very different types of the bronzed tones.

L——'s gold-lustre pitcher is a very fine specimen, fully six inches high, and of rather more than one quart capacity. The wide lower band of pink-purple lustre shows the familiar "house" design, and the inside rim also has a broad pinky stripe. This is another trophy from Maine, but since it was bought directly from a dealer, its history is all unknown to me.

And now I am proudly displaying the loveliest pitcher L—— has, the loveliest lustre piece, too, I think I have ever seen, barring that Swansea mug that even now I behold in my dreams: a rose lustre that had somehow caught the soft glory of a sunset

Of gold lustre, fully six inches high, of rather more than one quart capacity.

The loveliest pitcher L—— has.

From Mrs. Carleton's collection.

From Mrs. Carleton's collection.

From Mrs. Carleton's collection.

and forever imprisoned it in china. It is small, — a fraction between three and a half and four inches, — with a purple "house" design, the best interpretation of this well-known theme that I have ever found, for the trees are real trees, and you can look into distances. It is the sort of pitcher to enchant a child; it depicts a landscape

> Where if I were not so small
> I might live for good and all.

The four creamers grouped together are all small ones, none more than four and a half inches high. It is unfortunate that this photograph reveals so little of the charm of their color and design, and particularly unlucky that the prettiest one of all — the second on the right-hand side — shows hardly at all. Until I met the little purple treasure, I thought it the most attractive of all my acquaintance. The narrow band is pink with a deeper-toned lustre sprigging; the broad band white, the creamy-white that you see in Queensware, with a scroll-and-flower pattern in pink lustre and yellows and bright green. First in the group is the "Spotted Sunderland" lustre pitcher, pink with a purplish cast; the other two are variants of the "house" design, yet quite different, for the enclosing medallions are round on the taller piece, oval on the shorter, and the separating *motifs* are quite unlike. In both, the tones of pink are very fresh and clear. As for the little mugs, I

find them charming in their quaint colors: copper bands and handles, pink lustre in curves, and touches of green and a tawny orange-red that really combine wonderfully.

The Odd Fellows pitcher is more interesting than beautiful; although the pink spotted lustre decoration is good in tone. The design is one of the transfer processes, like the Liverpool ware. On one side is a symbolic group, the pattern a little blurred, as if the paper had been crumpled. Below you read, "Manchester Unity Independent Order of Odd Fellows." The other side depicts a river busy with commerce and a bridge spanning it, and the inscription is as follows: "A West View of the Cast Iron Bridge Over the River Wear, Built by L. Burdon, Esquire. Span 238 feet, Height 100 Feet, Begun 24, September 1793, Open'd 9, Aug. 1796." In the front is a five-pointed star in black outline, with the initial "G" in the centre. The middle piece, a Spotted Sunderland lustre cup-plate, is delightful, the tone deepening almost to a purple and lovely in its shading, while the centre is blue Staffordshire. But the cup and saucer, like the pitcher, has interest for its chief charm. It must be early nineteenth century, for the costumes shown are Empire, and it is full of that *larmoyant* feeling that people had who were very happy only when they were very miserable. A band of lilac lustre encircles both cup and saucer; on one side — oh, I wish you could really

see it clearly! — are three children touchingly clustered in a "cemetery" weeping before their "Mother's Grave," and on the other side, still in deep purples, are three disproportionate-sized "Orphans." To enliven the situation the "Mother's Grave" is repeated in larger, less compact grief, on the saucer. Can you imagine a more fitting receptacle for "the cup that cheers and not inebriates"? Well, L—— keeps it on a shelf in her cabinet!

The real teacups you see grouped just below these last. Of course, there are more, but these are the prettiest, and I am allowed, sometimes, for a great treat, to have that dearest one of all, the one in front with the maple-leaf and the clusters of berries. The color that you cannot see is a happy pink with a little lustre vine, green leaves, and bright blue berries. Almost its rival in beauty is the one beside it, crude blue and reddish flowers spaced between lustre and green leaves. Truly they are all lovely, and hunting for lustre cups for your tea-tray is quite as fascinating a pastime as discovering historical glass cup-plates; not easy to find, but rewarding at last the real devotee of their worth.

I wish that you could have seen me as I carried, oh, so carefully, these precious pitchers out to be photographed in the full light of the piazza. No acolyte at any altar ever walked more reverently than I did. On the whole, it was a wonderful experience; but I feel that it has aged me, and if any

one of you wants to court nervous prostration, allow me to recommend your handling another collector's lustre treasures. But I wish, too, that you might have sat beside me yesterday at L——'s Sheraton table as I studied with loving attention their every charm. By some happy chance the flowers in the centre were pink and purple asters, delicate shades that echoed the tones of the pieces before me. I know now that of "everything that pretty bin" pink lustre is the apotheosis of all prettiness.

VI

OLD LIGHTS AND LAMPS

Then I rose, lighted a Candle at Father's fire, that had been raked up from Saturday night, kindled a Fire in the chamber.
— *The Diary of Samuel Sewall.*

I KNOW a lucky lady who has twenty-seven pairs of old candlesticks, to say nothing of the odd ones she possesses. Of course it is L——; I sometimes think that she has just to wish for a thing hard to have it fall into her waiting hands, though, of course, I do know that patient, intelligent persistence has a deal to do with it, too. And she deserves the candlesticks, for, every night of her little girlhood in Vermont, she went to bed by the light of a tallow dip.

But before I, like a fortunate showman, display her treasures, let me tell you something about the old lights and lamps that our forefathers worked and courted and studied by. I quoted that simple, revealing sentence from Judge Sewall's diary because, in the twentieth century, when the ease of electricity makes even striking a match a wearisome process, it is so hard for us to visualize, to imagine in the least degree what the seventeenth century was enduring in real efforts and privation.

Picture to yourself the first pioneer light, a pine torch, — "candle wood" it was called, — flaring and dancing and answering the flames on the hearth, for

in the earliest days of the Colonies there were no lamps or candles. Tallow was lacking; cattle and sheep grazing on the commons belong to a somewhat later time, and in the earliest letters and inventories of Governor Winthrop, about 1632, we find constant mention of "ordinary suet and tallow" and "tallow and wick" as being among the necessities to be imported. When the candles themselves were sent over, they cost fourpence apiece: no small item of expense in a Colonial *ménage*, nor would it be to-day, for this same fourpence must be multiplied by three to give its real purchasing power now, and a candle for a quarter would be a decided luxury. Even as late as 1730 they were used sparingly. In his quaint, gossiping diary Samuel Sewall, telling of his unsuccessful wooing of Madame Winthrop, writes, — and, by the way, if you want an illuminating, fluent commentary on the life of the times you should surely read him, — "Madame Winthrop not being at Lecture, I went thither first; found her very serene with her dater Noyes, Mrs. Dering and the widow Shipreev sitting at a little Table, she in her armed Chair. She drank to me and I to Mrs. Noyes. After awhile I pray'd the favor to speak to her. She took one of the Candles, and went into the best Room, clos'd the shutters, sat down upon the Couch." Now, since both were well along in years, her one candle must be attributed to frugality, not coyness.

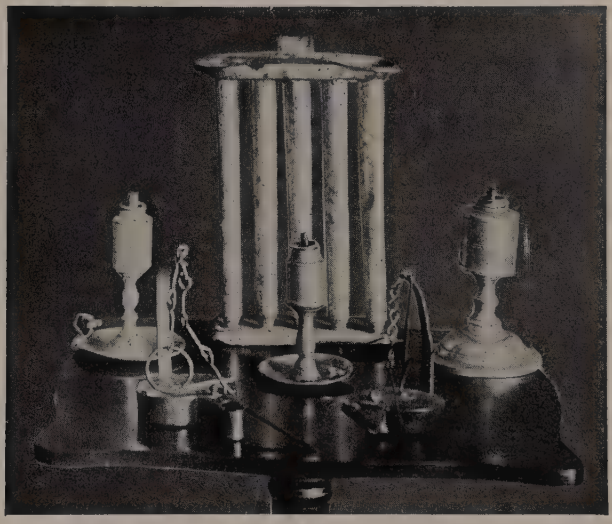
These smaller pairs of candlesticks are just as characteristic and different as their taller brothers.

From Mrs. Carleton's collection.

At first glance these six pairs of candlesticks seem very much alike, but examine them through a reading-glass and you will see the decided difference, for no two pairs are exactly alike.

Candlesticks found in New England villages.

A pair of traveling candlesticks with saucer bases and sockets that unscrew.



Candle-mould, three whale-oil lamps, and two "Betty Lamps." The latter could be suspended where they would give the reader his best light.

Where did all the candlesticks come from, I wonder? There are so many now. In 1636 they were important enough to be mentioned in several wills, often just a single candlestick being noted. Sixty years later, part of a legacy is recorded as being paid in 40 "brass candlestiks of a middle cize." In 1719 they were still being ordered from London; Judith Sewall's wedding outfit included "Two pair of large Brass sliding Candlesticks, about four shillings a pair, two pair of large Brass Candlesticks, not sliding, of the newest fashion, about five or six shillings a pair and four Brass Snuffers with Stands."

So much for candlesticks. A method of lighting almost equally used, following the pine torch, was the "Betty Lamp," shaped rather like the old Roman lamps, made of brass or iron, hanging from a chain ending in a large ring so that it might be suspended where it would give the reader his best light, sometimes on the round in the back of a chair, sometimes from a hook on the mantel-shelf. The body was filled with tallow or oil and a little rag or wick inserted at the lip. I have burned a Betty Lamp! I did not see what could possibly be the use of one in the house if you did n't know how it worked. So I took the larger one, the brass one there in the picture, filled it a third full of tallow and inserted a rudely twisted wick. It burned for an hour with a flame steadier and larger than a candle flame, and by a simple process of arithmetic I arrived at the con-

clusion that the lamp, filled, would burn nearly three hours. This one came from Massachusetts, the smaller iron one from Virginia, and both are furnished with the little metal pin for picking out the tallow or oil when it became clogged. The light the Betty Lamp gave was quite sufficient to read by; it was only when it went out that I regretted my experiment, for it left a confused, muttony sort of smell. I immediately understood why the colonists, when they found the abundant bayberry bushes growing along the seacoast, hastened to make their wax into candles, for, "if accident puts a candle out, it yields a pleasant fragrancy to all that are in the room; insomuch that nice people often put them out on purpose to have the incense of the expiring snuff."

Some day I shall make many of these spicy things, and burn them in your honor when you come to see me. For I have moulded and dipped candles myself! My spirit of research would not let me rest until I had tried, and I *had* always wanted to use these old candle-moulds discovered in a village attic. My market-man, who is of an obligingness, — often he looks up antiques for me when he goes hunting or fishing in the backwoods, for such is the neighborliness of a little country town, — got me all the tallow I wanted, and I embarked on what I am sure was one of the most endless of Colonial tasks. Moulding is not so difficult; perhaps that is why experts insist that a "dipped" candle is a much superior

product. The difficulty of moulding is merely a question of getting the wicks properly "threaded" through. I used a large darning-needle, and as I worked, I could n't help hoping that the ancestress whose spirit was urging me on had something better to work with than the poor, sleazy stuff that is sold for wicking nowadays. I read once that Colonial children used to gather milkweed silk and spin it into wicking. That seems like capturing a dream, does n't it? Well, my candle-wicking was quite as fragile; it acted as if possessed: gossamer, cobweb, moonshine! It broke if you looked at it! If I had lived in those days, I know I should have been haled before the Spiritual Court; Cotton Mather would have admonished me, and that pungently, for my expressed state of mind! After the wick has been run through the mould and secured at the top by being twisted around a nail to hold it in place, it is a comparatively simple matter to pour in the melted tallow, let it harden, and later remove it by much the same process you would use in taking ice-cream out of a mould.

I must confess to a certain feeling of primitive pride when my first candle slipped out: I lighted it, and it burned! Dipping is infinitely more tedious. You must have a kettle full of bubbling, boiling water, on top of which the melted tallow lies in a thick, yellowish sheet. The wicking must be looped over the candle-rods, and twisted into a stout wick. I tallowed mine to make them completely straight.

Next, if you are a wise woman, you will spread papers all over your kitchen floor; for you must dip and dip and dip the wicks endlessly into this melted fat — cooled a little, of course — in between letting them dry hard and firm, for a candle dipped too quickly will melt and run. They say, you know, that a good worker could dip her two hundred candles a day. At my rate of accomplishment I know I would not have been considered worth my board and keep in Puritan times. I have a vague memory of O—— coming in and asking, "Are you going to fight it out along those lines if it takes all summer?" Anyhow, no longer do I feel helpless; electricity may go, the exigencies of war take our kerosene, but my candles, like the knitting-needles in "Vassalissa the Fair," will gleam and "give me light enough."

The whale-oil lamps (on page 80) represent a little later stage of lighting than the Betty Lamps, just why, it is hard to say, for fish-oil was available in the Colonies before tallow. However, lamps such as these became common in the eighteenth century, and were usually made of pewter, although I have seen one pair made of copper and heard of another made of brass. The two larger ones have double wicks, the middle just a single one, and all three represent a type of whale-oil lamp much in use in New England in Colonial times, and still to be picked up cheaply. The little one, for instance, I bid in at an auction for five cents, and the others were a dollar

and a dollar and a half apiece. Mine are the plainer type, but whale-oil lamps can be very lovely. L—— and I found just such a treasure when we were out on quite another antique errand, the quest of a carved bed, to be exact. It was one of those beautiful days of early autumn, with a blue, hot sky, and clouds of yellow butterflies dancing round our wagon-wheels as we drove along an enchanting wood-road winding up and up, with a little brown brook to keep us company. We found the bed, and then we found this lamp: a fine, lustrous pewter, more beautiful in its lights and shades than silver, and as graceful and dignified and simple in shape as one some Pompeian girl might have used. And money could n't buy it! They had "had it a long time in the family." Oh, well, it is good for your soul to have something to want! Do you know I am wondering what Judge Sewall meant by those candlesticks "not sliding, of the newest fashion," because that smaller pair of French candlesticks (on page 90) are not sliding and are very old: this, the round circle of brass, to catch the wax-drip, shows. They were picked up at the Paris rag-fair, among the wreckage of some artist's studio, for a franc each. That, too, was the price of the central candlestick, bought at the same time—a very fair example of Empire, though not so good as the larger pair, for the chasing on these is beautiful. Somehow they had drifted to New Haven, and L—— knew that she had got a bargain

when she bought them at a little second-hand shop for six dollars.

I am wondering, too, how many of you have ever seen a pair of little traveling candlesticks like those on page 80? Practically, they are just a pair of sockets set in deep brass saucers, and they are very rare, this particular pair being the only ones we have ever found for sale in our North Country range. The sockets unscrew and fit inside the saucers, which, in their turn, screw together into one compact whole. It is said that they were first made in Salem, for the captains and supercargoes who, if they were very prosperous, had them fashioned of silver.

I like these candlesticks; they are very quaint, and they are a tribute to the wisdom of general conversation. In this case it was not only the traveling candlesticks, but another pair and a mirror and a stunning astral lamp-globe that we found in the little farmhouse. The other candlesticks have a less stirring history, but, since they came from our favorite dealer, — who picks up his treasures around the countryside much as we do, — their hidden stories must, I am sure, be interesting.

At the first glance these six pairs of candlesticks (on page 79) seem to be very much alike. I wish you would take a reading-glass and examine them carefully. If you do you will see the decided difference; for no two pairs are just the same. The very front ones are epoch-making; they were the "opening

wedge," and L—— really dates her collecting from the day that she bought them. Another pair represents our "swapping" system; the real New England dealer still loves to "trade" and dicker, and the price of these was a mahogany mirror-frame. But the large ones at the back are the most interesting of all — very massive, yet with a steady excellence of line. Although we bought them in an outlying country district, they originally stood on the parlor mantelpiece of an old hotel in a neighboring town, and another pair, their exact mates, still exist somewhere hereabouts, and, one fine day, we are going to find them. And please examine with your careful reading-glass the other smaller half-dozen pairs, for they are just as characteristic, just as unique, just as different as their taller brothers, and quite as much they represent our collecting range in New Hampshire and Vermont. Old candlesticks like these polish into a beautiful lustrous pallor, and L——'s almost wink at you, they shine so.

The saucer candlesticks (on page 89) came from an "old woman who lives under a hill," a beautiful hill, and that I mean literally, for, as we drove out of her dooryard, the pointed horizon-line, shouldering its way into the sky, faced us with loveliness. The by-products of "antique-ing" are wonderful, too, you know. These candlesticks are very good of their kind, with their small curved rings and little "palmettes," but are not to be compared for value

with the three tall ones grouped in front of them. These are most unusual and very old, with the slide at the side, not at the bottom, as so many of the later types have; and three of a kind of candlesticks in the game of "Collector's Luck" is very good fortune indeed. And their worth is enhanced by the fact that the snuffers and tray complete the set.

The Sheffield candlesticks, ten inches tall and of the shell-and-scroll pattern, are in really splendid condition, with not a shading of the copper showing through: an unusual thing for Sheffield, but then, they are cherished heirlooms, and, just think, on the other side of the family is a second set of a different pattern and quite as perfect, which L—— is waiting to have swept to her on her lucky tide of chance.

Those massive candlesticks all grouped together are American only in the sense that their emigrant owners brought them on their pilgrimage to this land of gold where, that they might stay, alas, they had to sell their brass and copper. The florid ones at the back are Polish; the rest, for the most part, came from a little shop in the North End of Boston kept by a Russian Jew, not long since a "greener" himself. It is just such collecting adventures that make you know how real a book like "David Levinsky" is. I think this earnest little Yiddish man always hoped to convert me; certainly his hospitality was as boundless as his Talmud lore, and he lavished both upon me. Friendliness lies anywhere you choose

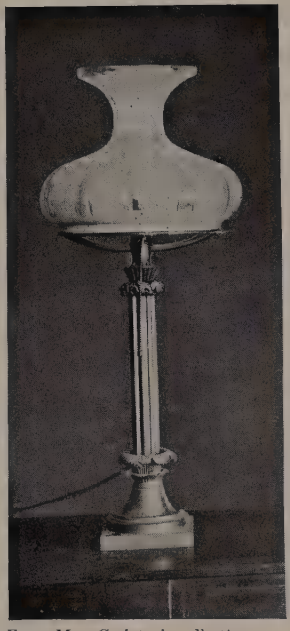
Two saucer candlesticks and three unusual and very old sticks with the slide at the side, not at the bottom. Snuffer tray in front.

Sheffield stick, one of a pair, ten inches tall, of the shell-and-scroll pattern, without a trace of copper showing.

The heavy candlesticks at the back of the photograph at the left are Polish; the rest came from a little shop in the North End of Boston kept by a Russian Jew.

Owned by the author.

An Empire candlestick picked up at a Paris rag-fair, as was the smaller stick, one of a pair, very old, with brass disk to catch the wax.



From Mrs. Carleton's collection.

Astral lamp with fluted bronze standard, fitted for electricity.

One of a pair of French Empire candlesticks bought in New Haven; very beautiful and stately.

to look for it, you see. Soon he invited me to "Passover" supper at his house; next, to his pretty niece Rosie's most orthodox wedding, the great occasion of his life. Maybe that is why I have such faith in the genuineness of his wares; but another and perhaps better reason is because candlesticks are used in such quantities as a necessary part of Jewish religious ritual, that there is more chance of finding really old ones than if they were merely means of lighting.

Do you suppose the reason L—— has so many lovely lamps is because, just as with the candles, she lived by their yellow glow in her girlhood? These astral lamps were very grand in their day of the early nineteenth century. Don't you remember Whittier's lines when Maud Muller was thinking "it might have been"?

> The weary wheel to a spinet turned,
> The tallow candle an astral burned.

Meant to indicate great splendor, you see.

This one is beautiful and dignified, with its fluted bronze standard, at the base set into curled-over acanthus leaves, at the top ending in fleurs-de-lis. The globe is unusually fine, ground glass spaced with transparent stripes, and the upper edge is cut in a clear diamond shape. It is quite thirty-one inches tall, and instead of burning oil has been fitted for electricity and stands on L——'s carved Empire table, a usable thing of beauty and a practical joy forever.

The next lamp, ten inches shorter, is lovely, too, its base being marble and gilt with a fluted support, the same *motif* being carried up under the pendants, which are beautifully cut. You will see quite a good deal of their delicate design if you look through my recommended reading-glass; and you can understand why small villages have a fascination for us when I tell you that this one came from a tiny place about ten miles north of us.

But I think I prefer the third lamp, even if the lustres are plain. The globe is so beautifully cut, the grooved standard almost classic in its simplicity, and the oil-well is glass, not metal. L—— found it in the little village just across the river, the one thing in a whole house that it would n't have been "a remission of sins" merely to have owned.

Little glass lamps are delightful for bedrooms, and these three are particularly pretty. The pair are all glass, the bases being pressed, and — let me tell you this for your comforting — the shades of these two are new. Ordinarily, most reproductions do not get the grace and "feeling" of these early-nineteenth-century globes, but the right type may be found by careful search and comparison. The body of the centre lamp is as beautifully cut as the shade, and so delicate that pendants would be superfluous.

Not that I don't like lustres: I think they are charming. I do not know when I have seen anything prettier than those fringing the little *bobèches* of the

Astral lamp with base of marble and gilt with pendants beautifully carved.

The grooved standard of this astral lamp is almost classic in its simplicity.

Little glass lamps are delightful for bedrooms, and these three are particularly pretty. The pair are all glass, the bases being pressed.

Two pairs of pressed-glass candlesticks. one with charming lustres.

Girandoles with an Indian chief as the bearer of the light.

Both groups owned by Mrs. Carleton.

glass candlesticks. If I were speaking in French I would call them *mignonnes*. From tiny glass beads, cut something the way an amber necklace is, hang long, straight icicles, and these end in cunning bells, with small glass tongues twinkling and tinkling inside, in shape a little as if a snowdrop had suddenly been crystallized. The candlesticks themselves are good examples of pressed glass, as are the other pair, too, the bases of the first being hexagonal, those of the second, round.

The girandoles, heirlooms also, are the end-pieces of a set, the centrepiece having gone to some other member of the family, and, of course, the completed trio would be more valuable. But I am showing you these because they in themselves are so good a design. I like the straight, perpendicular effect of the Indian figure, — do you suppose it is Tecumseh? — for most girandoles are too ornate and over-foliaged. The Indian chief is a fitting bearer of light.

As I have written all this I have felt very much a *laudator temporis acti*, an honest praiser of old days. I know I am fortunate to have electricity in my eighteenth-century cottage; but will any other light ever be as lovely as candlelight with its translucent glow beneath the flame? Will anything else ever seem as welcoming as lamplight? This winter, as I have driven through the countryside at dusk, and watched the little farmhouses, their small-paned

windows warm with a mellow glow, — the "yellow day," as Balzac calls it, — I have realized that in catching step with civilization we have left something of beauty on the road behind us.

VII

OLD VALENTINES AND SILHOUETTES

Like Pendennis, I have fallen in love. Not with the Venus of Milo, as he did, but with a gracious French lady, dressed in soft blues and pearly whites, and with the nicest smiling-serious face in the world. I want her more than I do anything else, I think, unless it is to have had Goya paint my portrait, — and so have been made forever interesting, — or to own Jane Austen's desk — which, though I have never seen it, must be good because it was built at a time when furniture just could n't be bad. I want her to hang against the grays of my parlor-walls and adorn them with her beauty. She would look as lovely there as in some old Perigord château, such is the universality of her charm. I shan't have her, though, for David's study of my incomparable Madame de Seriziat lives in a sumptuous Fifth Avenue gallery, and all I can do is to go occasionally to look and long. Oh, well, all of us should have these spiritual Carcassones. They are good for our souls.

But to have known her is a liberal education. "Universality of her charm" — I like that phrase even if I did write it, because it shows that I am developing a picture sense, and the feeling for walls and what should be on them is, almost invariably, the wisdom that lingers. What I mean I 've gained

is that instinct which preserves you from putting the oversentimentally sweet Psyche at Nature's Mirror against a dark paneled oak background, or hanging The Study in Anatomy in a boudoir. Which bit of philosophizing brings me to these old valentines and silhouettes. Three distinct values they have: they are very well suited to a "middling house," — and most of us have "middling houses," I fancy, — they are redolent of time's enchantment, and they do not throw out of key a room where you are trying for an old-fashioned effect, an ensemble of quaint, rested-looking furniture, as even a very good photograph of a very great masterpiece oftentimes will do.

They have a fourth dimension of merit, too: they are very inexpensive. Not that they did not lead me into ways of extravagance, because, after I had discovered them in a delightful shop, I found such an engaging engraving of the Duchess of Marlborough that I simply had to have it. It is from an early portrait, one of the few interesting pieces of work done by "that stupid, vaporing Kneller," and below, in faded brown ink, are the words, "13 July 1710, Paid in full, S. Marlborough." Sarah before she had cut off her curls in a tantrum and flung them at the Great Duke; Sarah while she was still dominating Anne and governing England. This is n't valentines, but I had to tell you about it.

As for valentines, perhaps they have been sent ever

"The pair of which this is one — they hang in the 'Prettiest Room'— are the oldest: the dress, the despair, the attitude of that melancholy gentleman, all are Byronic. The mate to this valentine will be found on the following page.

"As for the languishing lady, if you look close, I am sure you can see the towers of Udolpho in the distance. They are charmingly colored in pinks and blues, and the first border, just inside the heavier embossed edge, is delicately tinted in the same shades."

since the early Church Fathers turned the Lupercalia into a Christian festival: but the earliest record I have been able to find is when Pepys, writing on the fourteenth of February, 1667, says, "This morning came up to my wife's bedside, I being up dressing myself, little Will Mercer to be her Valentine; and brought her name writ upon blue paper in gold letters, done by himself, very pretty; and we were both well pleased with it. But I am also this year my wife's Valentine, and it will cost me five pounds; but that I must have laid out had we not been Valentines."

Nowadays there are n't any of these seventeenth-century paper posies left except in the lovely verse of those days: Waller's and Donne's and Drayton's; and even eighteenth-century ones are very rare. As for mine, they are all frankly nineteenth-century, London-made: one pair dating back almost to Waterloo; the others, for the most part, early Victorian. The first pair — they hang in the "Prettiest Room" — are the oldest; the dress, the despair, the attitude of that melancholy gentleman, all are Byronic; and, as for the languishing lady, if you look close I am sure you can see the towers of Udolpho in the distance. They are charmingly colored in pinks and blues, and the first border, just inside the heavier embossed edge, is delicately tinted in the same shades. The damsel sitting in a bower of roses (on page 112), with the tender missive pressed to her heart, and a symbolic bird-

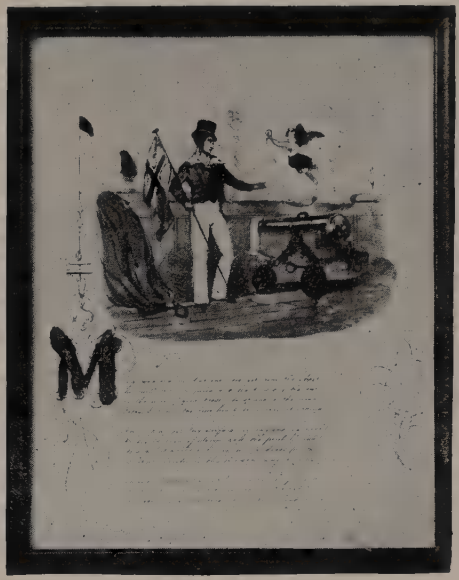
cage hanging on the trellis, is a little later. I have seen similar costumes dated 1831. She, too, wears rose-pink, and I cannot imagine a happier note of color for the walls of a simple bedroom. The feeling of this valentine is so gratifyingly of the times, also, that I am convinced that the lady adored "Childe Harold" and wept over "Lalla Rookh."

The Soldier and Sailor pair are more vivid in color; they have more stamina; in their rather crude reds and blues and yellows and greens they need the supporting strength of a black frame, just as the others are more suitably done in gilt. They are quite as naïve, however, and the one bit of mental superiority is the verse. I am quoting the sailor stanzas because, while they are very characteristic of this sentimental epoch, earmarked by sensibility, they are, nevertheless, unusually good for a valentine. Tom Moore might have written them — on an off day.

My fond one, my true one — ere yet from the shore
The sails shall be filled and the tars ply the oar,
Ere the sails of your vessel be spread to the wind,
Bethink thee the true heart thou leavest behind.

I will pray for thy welfare by day and by night —
In the darkness of storm and the perils of fight.
And all I would ask in my fondness for thee,
Is that sometimes thy thoughts may be wandering on me.

Farewell! gallant Sailor! dear Child of the wave,
In the storm none more active — in the battle more brave.
My spirit goes with thee all faithful and true,
Adoring and loving my gallant True Blue!



From the author's collection.

"The Soldier and Sailor pair are more vivid in color; in their rather crude reds and blues and yellows and greens they need the supporting strength of a black frame.

Collection of Mrs. Jarvis.

"The other pair, the second sailor and the pensive gentleman, both tone on the brown shades, and suit admirably their plain mahogany frames."

The other pair, the second sailor and the pensive gentleman, both tone on the brown shades, and suit admirably their plain mahogany frames. Indeed, with a little care in the selection of these valentines, they can be adapted to almost any simple room—I do not pretend that they have any of the qualifications of grandeur — I have found them even in a "languid violet," a delightful color for experiment.

Did you ever know that silhouettes were sent as valentines? I did not until I saw the one in the old gilt frame (on page 107), a most personal tribute of affection, don't you think? It would appeal to me far more than the prettiest valentine to be bought; for, to quote Mrs. Ethel Stanwood Bolton's opinion, which is precisely my own, "a silhouette at its best is a thing of real beauty and cleverness; at its worst it is a quaint handicraft, which at least shows the dress and the manners of the day." I know a collector, an amateur of really lovely things, whose judgments are valuable, and her theory is that, unless silhouettes have some real reason for being, intimate family pictures, for instance, or because they were the work of one of the mastercraftsmen of this art, they had better not be used. She dislikes "rooms full of black profiles, all welcomed because old." Now, to me, partly she is right and partly she is wrong. Silhouettes should be hung most sparingly — a very few, even in a large room; and, of course, every one of us would like to have authentic copies of the best

work done in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. But, as far as I am concerned, a silhouette, whether cut by Mrs. Pyburg in William and Mary's reign; done by Miers and Field of London; a creation of either of those talented youths, Master Hubard or Master Hanks; achieved by that delightful *émigré* Monsieur Édouart; or by our own American genius, William Henry Brown; or, on the other hand, just the humble production of some forgotten artist traveling through the countryside; a silhouette, I maintain, will to me always have the unique charm of distant days. I love those dignified gentlemen with their austerely aquilined profiles; those little ladies and their tip-tilted, flower-petal noses. Just such a one I saw recently in a Maine antique shop, and although she was hanging between a very good Constitution mirror and a hooded highboy, most excellent company, I feel that I ought to send for her and give her a more domestic milieu. Of course, you can't adopt every one that attracts you, though two orphans did appeal to me so much the other day that only an empty pocketbook stood between me and my maternal instincts. Both wore long pantalettes; one little black figure carried a whip, the other a reticule, and the dress of this last little girl was not black at all, but an inserted strip of quaint purple silk. A fairly unusual type this is, but then, one of the beginning mistakes of a collector is to imagine that a silhouette is

Valentine silhouette.

Unknown man (1830).

Millie Blake (painted glass and gilt frame).

Silhouette in blue and black.

All four from Dr. Coburn's collection.

An old Connecticut ship-captain.

Governor Corner.

"Lucy" (pewter frame, very rare type).

Lucetta Williams (framed in ebony and gold).

An old New Hampshire school-master.

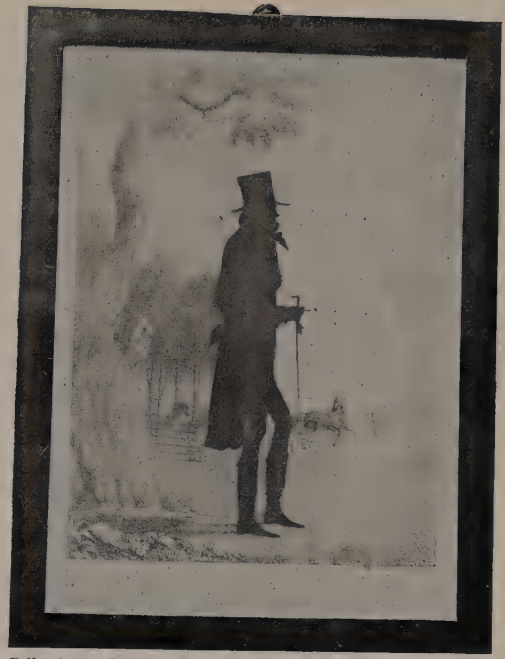
only a profile cut out of black paper and pasted on a white background, or just the reverse. On the contrary, there were many kinds: done with brush and India ink on ivory, plaster, or card — the little Directoire silhouette with its rippled profile is an instance of this style; painted on glass, sometimes with a mixture of pine-soot and beer to give an intenser blackness, and touched delicately with gilt; the charming color silhouettes; and the rarest and loveliest type of all according to connoisseurs thus described by Mrs. Bolton: "The likeness painted on convex glass in such a way that one did not look directly at the painted face to see the silhouette, but upon a white card behind upon which the shadow was cast."

Both Édouart and Brown became so popular that they had made a set of lithographed backgrounds for what might be called their "Great Men Series." John Randolph of Roanoke is shown standing against a characteristic background, one which he might well have chosen himself. To me this is one of the most revealing, actual silhouettes I know. Look at it, and see if it is not like what one of his personal observers — I will not say admirers — wrote of this whimsical, bad-tempered, witty old aristocrat. "His long, thin legs, about as thick as a stout walking cane, and of much such a shape, were encased in a pair of tight small-clothes, so tight that they seemed part and parcel of the limbs of the wearer." Standing severely

there, you can almost hear him rebuking his opponent, the watch-maker Congressman. "Sir, you can mend my watch, but not my motions. You understand tictics, sir, but not tactics." Perhaps I am like Monsieur Poirier: it may be that I like my pictures at least to suggest a story. That is why I am so fond of silhouettes; each one has its little legend, whether you have heard it or not. Certainly all that I am showing you have, but there is room for only one more, the tender tale of Millie Blake. When the nineteenth century was very young indeed her sea-captain husband sailed away on a long, long voyage, a voyage from which he never came back. Before he left she promised that every night a candle should burn at the window to welcome him home; and, every night, that candle burned, not only during Millie's life, but for generations, until the family died out, and the old house was sold to strangers.

And so my advice is to have your profiled forebears if you can; and, if you cannot, be very happy to hang some other body's ancestors, snipped by nimble, long-ago scissors, against your walls, to give them charm and character.

This Directoire gentleman with the ruffled shirt-front belongs to the author



Collection of Dr. Coburn.

John Randolph of Roanoke.

"The feeling of this valentine is so gratifyingly of the times that I am convinced that the lady adored 'Childe Harold' and wept over 'Lalla Rookh.'"

VIII

OLD GLASSWARE

If, Gentle Readers, you should learn later that I am languishing in a county jail, you must understand that it is all your fault. You see, I was ambitious; I wanted to know everything that could be known about the charming old glassware that you pick up now and again at sales and shops and auctions and little out-of-the-way places. And such information is expensive; a body can have but an academic knowledge of what she has never bought. I need n't, I am sure, go on with my sad story. As yet I have n't expended any vast sums, but my feet are firmly planted on the downward path, for old glass has always had what I am tempted to call a holy fascination for me. I do not know anything more engaging than these delicate things that have lived so long — so fragile, yet so resisting time; nor yet anything so eloquent of hospitality; and, if I am being ruined, it is in a high cause.

The illustrations and my words, I hope, may convert you, also, to this divine madness, but better still and more certain would be examining the old pieces themselves, handling them, if you may, for if you can get the "feel" of the texture, you are on the way to becoming a discriminating collector. Indeed, one connoisseur I know tells me that there

is no more final way of testing old glass and china than by touching it to the tongue — somewhat after the fashion of the old-time laundress who "tasted" her irons to see if they were the right temperature. I have tried this honestly and with my eyes shut, but I cannot yet tell the tongue-difference between a Lowestoft cup and a modern piece of similar size and texture. I merely give it to you for what it is worth.

There is n't much use in my trying to write the history of glassware in one short chapter, is there? If you don't agree with me, a casual stroll through the glass-rooms of the Metropolitan Museum will convince you, I am sure. You all know that the art is as old as time itself, that it came down from the early Egyptian days, and that the Phœnician legend may be even a truth. In the Museum there are several pieces of Sidonian glass, and one cup, a dull amber-green, bears an inscription which, translated, runs, "Let the buyer remember."

Ah, far-away, dead-and-gone buyer in that distant time and town! Truly, "the bust outlasts the throne, the coin Tiberius." And the Romans used glass, so we are told by one authority, much more commonly than we do now, — read Machen's "Hill of Dreams," and see how beautifully he paints its color and loveliness, — and, where they colonized, there their glass was also made. Even in Great Britain there are traces of Roman glass-making, and the fires of the

Collection of Mrs. Carleton.

Early nineteenth-century glass picked up in northern New England. The cruet and decanter are especially interesting.

Enameled Stiegel mug, flower and pheasant design—an unusually fine specimen in "proof" condition.

Collection of Shreve, Crump and Low Company.

Waterford glass, late eighteenth century — unusually fine and stately pieces, beautifully cut.

Collection of Dr. Coburn.

Five decanters, each one of a pair, two cut, one Bohemian, one pressed, one blown. Notice the difference in the decoration and in the varied stopper shapes.

craft died down and burned up through the centuries, until they reached a steady flame of excellence in the late sixteen-hundreds. You have heard of the glory that was Venice and the grandeur that was Bohemia; but, as I am quite sure that none of us are going to discover Portland vases or authentic Verzellini wine-glasses, I am just telling you the short and simple annals of the various pieces I chose to point my moral and adorn my collecting-tale. For many of these quaint and charming pieces were picked up here and there through the New England countryside, and the first group, as you might guess, is L——'s. It is a pity that you cannot see more clearly the attractive etched festoons that adorn the decanter, the wine-glasses, and the little cruet. The tumbler — L—— has a pair of them — flares slightly at the top, and is decorated only with a ring of ridges, and probably all five pieces are early nineteenth century. L—— owns also the beautiful Stiegel mug. The enameled decorations, pheasant and flower, naïve in their coloring, sturdy tones of green, blue, yellow, and red, are perfectly preserved, and as clear as they were the day they came from the glass-works of "Baron" Stiegel.

What an interesting human being he was; what an individual personality he has written into the pages of America's manufacturing history! Some day you must read Mr. Hunter's delightful study of this man and all his works, for I can give you just

the barest details. Heinrich Wilhelm Stiegel was born near Cologne on May 13, 1729, and, after his father's death, came to America with his mother and younger brother. His early struggles, his connection with the iron business, even then flourishing in Pennsylvania, his marriage to his master's daughter, his increasing prosperity, his magnificent style of living, and his real merit, have been admirably and accurately related by Mr. Hunter. So much legend surrounds the man! And perhaps he was not all that grandiloquent tradition testifies; but I am so glad that "The Feast of Roses" has been reëstablished at Mannheim, where he erected his first glass-house, and created an artistic craft, in itself a feather in America's commercial cap. You see, once he cast his bread upon the waters by canceling the debt of the Lutheran church there, "one red rose annually in the month of June forever" to be the only payment, and now, on the second Sunday in June, roses are piled within the chancel-rails of the Zion Lutheran church at Mannheim, and a red rose is sent in fee to one of Baron Stiegel's descendants.

He brought the tradition of his craft from Germany where glass-making had been an art for centuries. I realized this when I saw at the Metropolitan Museum a little green glass pitcher with the applied thread design, found at Cologne and dating from the third century, for it has much the same feeling, color

Engraved and initialed white flint Stiegel tumbler, with a short baluster stem. The engraving is unusually good.

Both of these tumblers are from the Hunter collection in the Metropolitan Museum.

Collection of Dr. Coburn.

The first and third are Stiegel pieces, the other two the later type.

A Stiegel bottle from the Metropolitan Museum, known to have been done by Sebastian Wilmer, one of Baron Stiegel's imported workmen.

White flint toddy-glass from the Hunter collection, in the Metropolitan Museum. These glasses with tops are very rare.

Collection of Mrs. Carleton.

So-called Stiegel glass, but in reality made in the early nineteenth century. From the inscriptions on the mugs they may have been intended for children.

and "air" as some of Stiegel's own work made hundreds of years later.

He even imported workmen, — the lovely flowered bottle is the achievement of one of them, Sebastian Witmer, — but he was a most loyal American, and it is said that Elizabeth Furnace — one of his foundries and named for his first wife — was once the only place where Washington's army could get cannon-balls. He protested vigorously against the importation of foreign goods, and it was a keen chagrin to him to feel that, to sell his wares in Boston and New York, the dealers had to assure their customers that they came from across the water. Baron Stiegel's rise was rapid; his fall even swifter; his success, while it lasted, phenomenal; and the tragedy of it is that this American craftsman-genius should have died in utter poverty, and been buried in an unknown grave.

Stiegel died in 1785, but the feeling of this enameled glass that he introduced lasted on until the nineteenth century, and now and again you will find pieces of this type sold as Stiegel. But while they are thoroughly charming with their gay little colors, and certainly related, though distantly, they are not his work at all. The group of two tumblers flanked by the two taller mugs will show you precisely what I mean.

Of course, glass-making had been attempted early in the history of our colonization, the year 1607, in Jamestown, marking the first venture. It is said that

Italian workmen were brought over to assist in the enterprise. But no definitely good, artistic work was accomplished until the days of Wistar and Stiegel in the middle eighteenth century. Glass was imported from England and the continent as soon as the settlers had adjusted themselves to fairly secure and comfortable lives, and continued to be imported, as I said before, even when America had created a craft of her own. The magnificent group of cut-glass épergne, compotes, and sweetmeat dishes (on page 116) is old Waterford, and though they have just come over, they are precisely what our beauty-loving ancestors bought when they could afford them. For Waterford in Ireland was one of the glass-making centres: beautiful cutting, rather shallower than we moderns interpret cut-glass, was done there until the excise duties in 1825 killed the industry. And "Venice glasses," such as you see in the long rows, were constantly imported during those early days. I am wondering just which of these patterns is like the ones Samuel Sewall describes in his Diary. "July 18th, 1687, — Mr. Mather had two Venice glasses broken at our Meeting." Now, as not one of this godly company could be described as a "lewd, roistering fellow," I am attributing the destruction to the sweeping results of religious fervor.

Bristol was an important glass-centre, too, and the late-eighteenth-century decanters (on page 116) — almost the finest I have ever seen — and this

From the Metropolitan Museum.

Fragile Venetian glasses, delicately shaped and charming through their bubble-like transparency. Notice the elaborate stems.

Collection of Dr. Coburn.

Three opaque Bristol pieces quaintly decorated.

From the author's collection.

The "Lafayette decanters." Late eighteenth-century cut-glass pieces from Bristol, England, the pattern delightful and individual.

group of three milky, opaque glasses probably came straight from that city. There were three other decanters, and we call them the "Lafayette decanters" because, in 1824, — when he was being fêted all over America, — the set was sent down by my ancestors to be used at the big civic banquet given in Nashville, Tennessee, in his honor. These three descended to my side of the family; quite perfect they were, too, except for one tiny nick on the further one, and that happened when my grandmother kept open house during the Polk-Clay campaign. My mother just remembers it; she was a tiny thing then, dancing about the big old hospitable Southern yard, and the gay-colored lanterns, each representing a state, — a yellow one for "little Rhody," — hanging there in the dusk made an immense impression on her childish mind. As did, also, a big coon, for some reason a Clay mascot, running up and down and rattling his chain in the tall walnut tree. All this for the "Clay Guards," for my family were Old Line Whigs; and the next night everything was darkened as if for some tragedy when the "Polk Fusileers" paraded past the house. They still tell a story of their captain stopping at the gate to ask an old negro standing beside it why there were no lights, and what his master's politics were, whereupon the darkey answered, "I disremember, Sah, but I knows he is what you is n't!" Somehow, these decanters seem to me to hold memories as glowing as the wine that

has filled them. Do you wonder that, in their later years, they are treated with the greatest care and consideration? And at Bristol they still make the opaque glass; I saw a piece the other day, more sophisticated, but I do not think possessing any more charm than these quaint scenes that resemble the mediæval, red-roofed Troy Town that Swinburne and Rossetti describe.

Bristol, too, stands sponsor for some of the charming eighteenth-century wine-glasses, of all things my desire, and what I am going to collect as soon as ever my ship comes a-sailing in. England, you know, had for some time been making glass successfully. A Venetian, one Jacob Verzellini, worked in Crutched Friars, under a patent that dated from 1575 and was to last for a quarter of a century. There are three of his glasses still to be seen: one at Windsor Castle, the other two in the British Museum, carefully preserved as very precious evidences of that early glass-making time. Later, the Duke of Buckingham, always interested in his country's manufactures, established a glass-furnace at Greenwich, and in 1673 Evelyn records in his Diary, "Thence to the Italian house at Greenwich, where glass was blown of a finer metal than that of Murano, at Venice"; and, twelve years later, he notes, "his Majesty's health being drunk in a flint-glass of a yard long."

And then from 1690 to 1810 — the dates are approximate only — these delightful wine-glasses were

made: baluster-stem, plain-stem, air-twist, white-twist and cut. There they are, rather roughly classified, and the bowls are even more numerous: the Drawn, Bell, Waisted Bell, Straight-Sided, Rectangular, Ovoid, Ogee, Lipped Ogee, Double Ogee, and Waisted. When you have mastered these details, you may feel, as I did, very much as the White Queen must have felt when she had "believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast." I have given you such a list of names that I almost hesitate to describe the types of feet; but I will risk it, for there are only four principal ones: Plain, Folded, Domed, and Domed Folded. The fold was to give additional strength, the dome to make the glass sit evenly on the table and keep the roughness of the "pontil-mark" from scratching the wood. And, by the way, always remember this, that a glass with a pedigree has a "high instep," and if you find one very flat-footed, or, except on the cut-stems, with the "pontil-mark" ground away, the chances are that the glass is spurious. For fakers are beginning to copy these old wine-glasses very skilfully indeed, because the price that the genuine glass brings is temptingly high — so very high, really, that nation-wide prohibition assumes the aspect of a twofold blessing. But this for our comforting: even the cleverest copier in the world cannot reproduce the effect of that silvery air-twist, the twist that grew, perhaps by accident, out of the adorning "tear" in the stem, for the process

has been lost, and we are safe in purchasing that type — if we have the money!

I have a theory which I hope you share. All of us, at least all of us with romantic tendencies, no matter what our political principles, are Jacobites at heart, are n't we? I know that you would have rejoiced with me in a very fine collection of Jacobite glasses that I have just seen: glasses that Harry Esmond, before he broke his sword and renounced his allegiance, might have drunk from as he toasted "The King over the water"; glasses engraved with the oak tree, thistle, and the Stuart rose with its two buds, emblematic of James the Second and the Old and Young Pretender; even with the portrait of "Bonnie Prince Charlie" himself. Others were inscribed with "Fiat" (the Cycle Club's motto), "Redeat" and "Audentior Ibo," each earnest of the hope that breathes in the old Scotch song "Better lo'ed ye canna be; will ye no come back again?" And would n't you like to own some of those dram-glasses (on page 130), fashioned of lead-glass, thick and heavy at the bottom? "Firing-glasses" they were called, because of the noise they made when the roisterers thump-thumped them on the table in applause. Would n't they make you see the long, smoke-filled room, the hospitable board, and, through the haze, Tom Jones and Humphrey Clinker and the beloved Uncle Toby sitting there?

Of course, all inscribed glasses are not Jacobite; I

Courtesy of Brooklyn Museum.

Jacobite glasses engraved with the oak tree, thistle, and the Stuart rose with its two buds, emblematic of James the Second and the Old and Young Pretender; even with a portrait of "Bonnie Prince Charlie" himself.

Courtesy of Brooklyn Museum.

"Firing-glasses," so called because of the noise made when the roisterers thump-thumped them on the table in applause.

am thinking of one — such a slender glass — in this same collection, engraved "Herte be true." The gift of some lover to his lass, maybe; but, just to show you that all sentiment was not confined to the mother-country, let me tell you of a pair of engraved flip-glasses, large ones, that live in one of Mr. Francis Bigelow's loveliest cabinets. The first is marked "John," the second "Mary." Now, who was it that defined domestic happiness as "two pairs of feet on the fender?" I constantly think of this happy Colonial couple, sitting together before a blazing hearth, with these glasses full of steaming flip, rocking and sipping in harmony.

Collecting old glass is such a joy! Once, in a little, shabby suburban shop, I found a charming decanter; early nineteenth century, cut a little, engraved a great deal — and I gave it away to one of the most attractive women I know, a friend who loves old glass quite as much as I do. And parting with it was n't a pang, really, because my collecting creed tells me that you must never keep what you could not give away, nor give away anything that you would not willingly keep. Another "find" is the cut and engraved cruet (on page 133), which might be either Spanish or Dutch, for both countries so reacted on each other. It is one of the finest pieces of glass I ever saw, and D—— and I bought it for a song — an expensive song! You could buy several Caruso records for what we paid — in a little, dark downstairs

shop on an ancient side-street that used to be one of the "green lanes of North Boston."

And those big, browny-olive bottles with their rough pontil-mark at the bottom can so often be picked up at country auctions. One such time is as indelibly engraved on my memory as the designs on those old glasses I have been showing you. My first auction it was, too, and I think I have never seen so many desirable things all together at once at any other country sale: a Hepplewhite secretary, slat-back chairs, copper-lustre pitchers, a Nanking coffee-pot, — I got that! — a little, squat, jolly brown "Toby," — the only piece of Bennington I ever wanted, — and this lovable, old, fat, green bottle. We were terribly excited, R—— being especially agitated. He had motored miles to get that Bennington "Toby," and he meant to have it. The desire of his whole collector's soul shone eloquently in his eyes. The bottle was put up for sale first, and he bought that. Then, clasping it in his arms, he sat awaiting the Bennington treasure — and near a Franklin stove! Here is the crux of the tragedy; here, perhaps, you discern the beginning of the end. Up and up went the bidding, and, finally, as R—— stretched out trembling, triumphant hands to seize his trophy, he knocked the bottle against the edge of the stove, and crash, smash, like the "Luck of Edenhall," went all that old greeny glass in fragments at his feet! So, you see, you must remember when

Collection of Francis Bigelow.

An interesting group, two flip glasses and a celery holder, all beautifully engraved.

Collection of Mrs. Carr.

Cut and engraved Spanish or Dutch cruet. A very fine and dignified piece standing twelve inches high. The sides are slightly flattened and beautifully decorated.

Courtesy of Metropolitan Museum.

These quaint old browny green bottles have charming decorative qualities.

Collection of Dr. Coburn.

Five flip glasses, each also one of a pair. The second with its toddy stick is very interesting.

you buy one of these ancient bottles to be very careful. Remember, too, that they are delightful receptacles for certain flowers, the hardy, homely sort: roses are too delicate, but pink phlox, pink snapdragon, and, above all, pink peonies, become their naïve, simple quality admirably.

When I was a small, wondering girl I used to stop, caught by the rainbow beauty of the iridescent Cypress glass in the Museum, and dream over this loveliness that had outlasted the ages. Now I know that my youthful enthusiasm meant that I should live one of the most ardent protestants to be of all charming antique glassware.

IX

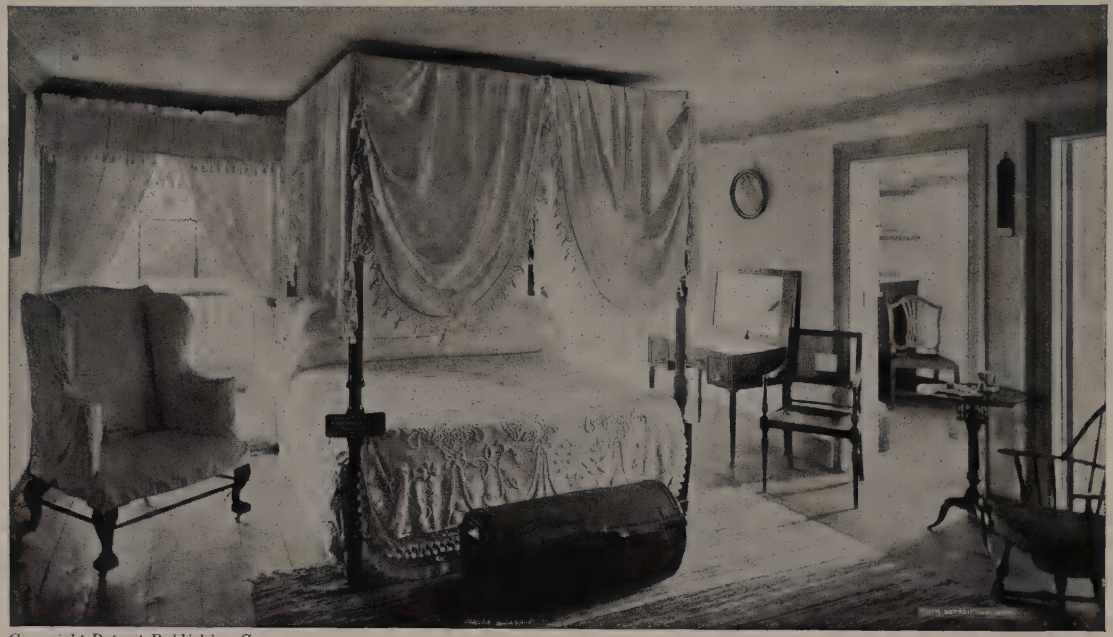
OLD WHITE COUNTERPANES

AGAIN I have been darning a coverlet, this time a fine linen, creamed with age. It was made for my great-grandmother, woven under her careful direction in East Tennessee when the nineteenth century was in its first quarter. I know even about the nimble black fingers that embroidered the design, for they belonged to "Mammy Fanny," who, later, came to Nashville with the "young Mistress," my grandmother, and was my own mother's special nurse. A very close bond existed there, I think, for all my life I remember hearing stories about this tall, dignified negress who was really a personality, and who wore her bandanna handkerchief bound around her head with almost Oriental pride. And so kind to the children she was, so devoted to them, that, when offered her freedom and a chance to go to Liberia, she absolutely refused to leave the little things she had loved and "raised." I know that, if I had been a Northerner at that time, I should, also, have been a mad, impassioned abolitionist, otherwise my present liberalism means nothing; but I cannot help knowing, too, that the South held much happiness and frank affection and old memories that are very sacred. That is one reason why I love my counterpane; the other is because it is beautiful, — well, per-

haps rather engagingly pretty, — with its somewhat sketchy embroidery, — a little after the manner of an ancient "lazy daisy" stitch, — the whole effect being that of a wandering vine-pattern and a central basket of flowers that is very much like the designs Stiegel etched on his toddy-mugs and flip-glasses. Unfortunately photography will reproduce only patterns standing in bolder relief, so you must take its prettiness on trust until you see it upon my carved Empire bed. In the meantime I shall be bleaching it: when the dog-days are done and all danger of mildew is past, I shall put it out on the grass and let the bright suns of early autumn and the racing winds whiten it magically for me. First you wet the web, of course, and then, when it is dry, you wet it again; and wise ladies tell me that this old-world way is infinitely superior to any amount of soap, or even what we call hereabouts "elbow-juice." It is better really than the freezing-bleaching process, for that is apt to weaken the strands of the fabric. My coverlet and my Empire bed are about the same age, and they will go "companionably" together. I've worked so hard to dress that bed properly! You see, so many quite charming old beds suddenly lose this charm of theirs because the right things are not put on them; sometimes a counterpane that makes the bed look as if an old lady were masquerading in her granddaughter's clothes. Maybe that comparison is n't worth much nowadays in our present terms of

fashion, but you understand, don't you? And then, when the coverlet is all right, the pillow-shams are all wrong. That mine are right comes by the luck of discovery, for I found the pattern in a little old house way up in the Vermont hills; and because so many people have asked me just how they were made, and I think you might like to know, too, I am passing the directions on to you. I made mine from very fine longcloth, though I think linen would be better, and fine-meshed dimity a pretty alternative. The length is thirty-five inches, the width twenty and a quarter, — of course, these measurements are not rigid, they can be adapted to any size pillow you wish, — and the adornment is little, frilly ruffles, ruffles gathered in the centre and spaced three inches apart. The gathering of the first frill comes at the edge of the sham which makes it a little less bulky in effect; and when they are freshly ironed they are the prettiest, quaintest things you can imagine. But they *are* hard to do up; sometimes I think I'll get myself a "goffering-iron." Like "dear Mrs. Tiggywinkle's," you know. Don't you remember, in that charming tale, how she took little Lucie's pinny, "and ironed it and goffered it and shook out the frills"? As I have a house that much resembles Mrs. Tiggywinkle's, I think it would be most appropriate.

There is infinite variety in these old white counterpanes. L—— has three delightful old-fashioned



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Washington's bedroom at Mount Vernon. The bed, with its counterpane and draperies so harmoniously arranged, is extremely effective.

Collection of Mrs. Carleton.

Old quilted counterpane done in the middle of the nineteenth century. The design was drawn by a Hungarian exile, a follower of Kossuth. The work is very fine and beautiful.

beds, and an entirely different type of spread rests on each one. The first — again I rail at the inadequacies of photography, for half of its fine loveliness does not show — is one of the most charming, intricate pieces of needle-craft that I have ever seen, worthy even of L——'s Hepplewhite room, and that is high praise. To-day, as I looked at it, the dear lady who had quilted it said, "I wish I had a penny for every stitch I took in it"; and I felt that if she had, she would be rich beyond the dreams of avarice. Those tiny, tiny stitches! Do you suppose we shall ever again rise to such apotheoses of sewing? And the design has an interesting story. It was drawn a number of years before it was quilted, by an Hungarian exile, a follower of Kossuth, who had drifted to this country, and who turned his native talent of music into a profession, and gave lessons to support himself. He drew a number of these patterns for his pupils, and this one embodies both America and Hungary. In the centre is the eagle of his adopted country, with the thirteen stars above and "E Pluribus Unum" below, and in the corners is an Hungarian *motif*. Above and below the eagle are graceful cornucopias, but whether they were symbolic of the plenty that he found in his adopted country or of what he hoped for his native land, tradition has never told me.

The second is a quilted counterpane, too, and this adorns such a slender, fluted mahogany "four-poster" with a field canopy. The work is less fine,

but it is very nearly as handsome; if I liked to apply so very modern a word as "stunning" to an old counterpane, I think I might call it that. It is, also, a very unusual type, and very attractive in the manner in which the padded pattern stands out against the quilted surface. It began life way, way up in these Northern hills, and its owner, before L—— bought it, was, in spite of the possession of this lovely bit of age, most mid-Victorian in her tastes. Her house was adorned with the many, many things she had made and painted and decorated; but they were her idea of beauty and she was very happy in them, and, since innocent human happiness is one of the ends of life, I, for one, shan't grudge them to her. You know, often in the countryside you will still find such odd embellishments: roses made out of leather, and so on, which are, I suppose, the rural equivalent of the gilded plaster lion; once, even, I saw one of the framed coffin-plates that everybody insists are found only in stories. I almost wept with joy when I beheld this vindication of literature; I did n't want to own it, of course, but I felt so grateful once to have witnessed this concrete symbol of Victorian gloom.

As for L——'s third coverlet, I am not sure that it is not my greatest favorite of all, the design is so graceful, so symmetrical. It is what is known as a candle-wicking spread, in other words, a counterpane made usually of a homespun linen (or cotton sometimes), with the tufted design worked in candle-wicking or

Collection of Mrs. Carleton.

Quilted white counterpane with the padded design standing in very bold relief. An especially handsome and effective piece.

Collection of Mrs. Carleton.

L——'s candle-wicking spread. Less intricate than some of the others in design, it is, nevertheless, very graceful and symmetrical.

a full cotton yarn. Now I dislike more than anything else to be academic; I dipped candles that I might tell you about them, and I am "drawing-in" a rug after an old pattern so that I may be really intelligent about it and practical in my advice. But I simply cannot stop, my dear Friends in Collecting, to make a candle-wicking spread so that I shall be qualified to tell you exactly how it is done. However, I have been talking to past mistresses of this art and taking experimental stitches, just enough to keep my counsel from being pure theory. I think that the task must have been easier in bygone times, for then candle-wicking was more durable and firmer; the stuff they sell nowadays being quite "no account." And it will have to be vigorously bleached, for it is rather a dark écru; at least all that I have been able to get is very far from white. Then you will need your counterpane carefully marked with a chosen design, — this, I am told, is the most difficult part, — an embroidery or darning-needle with an eye large enough to take in a thread of candle-wicking which must be used doubled, and endless patience! If the cloth, whether linen or cotton, is unbleached, the work will be easier, for then the threads will not have to be tied before shearing. The process really is not unlike "drawing-in" a rug, if you have ever done that; the weight of the wicking holds it in place, you see. I meant to gather more information for you: to walk across our blue watered ribbon

of a river into our next-door state — I always feel a queer little thrill of surprise at being able to be in two states almost simultaneously! — and talk to an old lady there who has made a number of these counterpanes. I have never seen them, but I know that they must be attractive, for she herself is so very pleasant, and so full of the joy of life that, over seventy, she seems about fifty-five. But, instead, I went to an old-furniture sale, and I know you will forgive me when I tell you that I bought three lovely pieces of old glass for fifteen cents, and a prettily turned light-stand for seventy-five, and two silver-plated cups of chaste design and beautiful engraving for so little that I am ashamed to tell you just how little it was, although the prices were already set and I had nothing whatever to do with them. My one comfort was that the uninteresting modern pieces were selling for such magnificent sums; it made me feel less guilty. And, as I brought my treasures home, another happiness was mine, for I was lighted by a round, pale moon just climbing over the horizon. Personally I like a great bubble-moon walking through the high heavens with dignity; I had not the faintest desire for Merlin's power to hurry her, scudding, through the clouds. Rather I delighted in her calm, and at home, when I had polished my cups, I took them out of doors to see how much more silver the silver moonlight made them.

Moonlight, broad stretch of meadows and such peace!

Collection of Mrs. Patten.

The candle-wicking spread E—— made. Notice the resemblance to the one that follows.

Collection of Mrs. Patten.

The old candle-wicking spread that E—— used as her model. An unusually large and handsome one.

And I loved my little house, the little house full of my *dear* things, with its background of black velvet shadows, its vine-trimmed porch, its banded phlox. That 's what I mean by the joy of collecting: it weaves such a pleasant pattern of life for you.

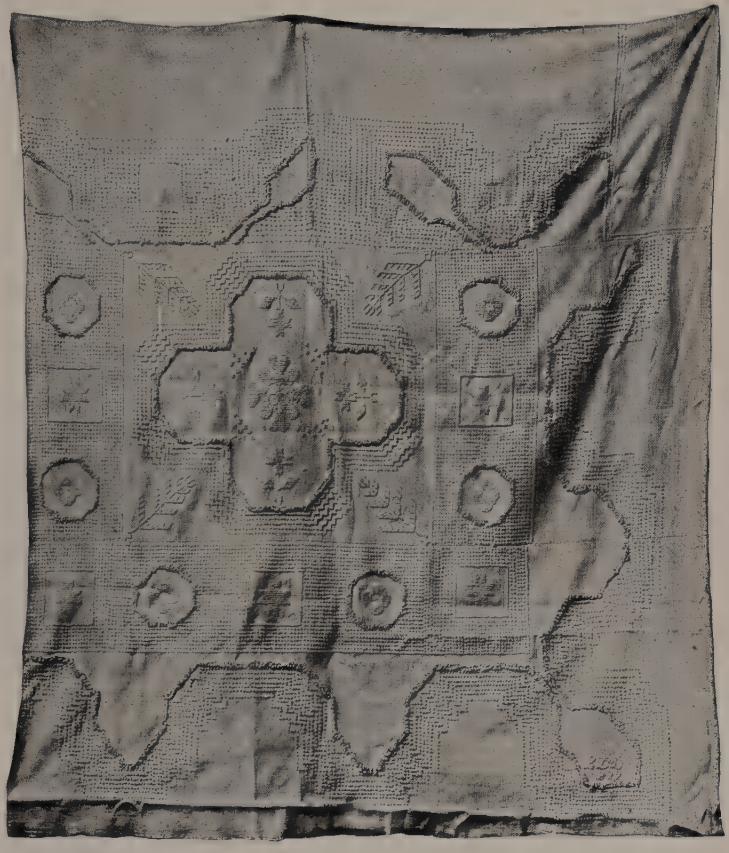
But why do I speak of these coverlets as all in the past? E—— made one only a year or so ago, and here it is, an infinitely laborious counterpane, copied, or perhaps I should say modeled, on the old one that follows. It took her six months to do it; of course, I suppose, she did n't work night and day on it, but I fancy it was pretty steady "pick-up" work. She tufted the centre design first, and then worked the connecting lines, corners and festoons. The fringe, she confessed, she found the hardest part of all, for she took one whole summer doing it, finally getting a stick and knotting the wicking over and over, rather after the fashion of a fisherman making nets. We marveled at her when it was done, but so far as I know she has never had the flattery of imitation. Most of us think it looks like a life-work. But then E—— is a specialist in coverlets; she has so many charming ones: three candle-wicking and three others.

Of course, I am always hoping that some day I shall have one of these tufted candle-wicking spreads of my own, but I have not yet found one with the necessary three dimensions, by which I mean a spread that measures itself at once to my bed, my

fancy, and my pocketbook. At times, you know, you can get such bargains; I have seen good ones sold for ten, and sometimes even five dollars. Once I bought one for a small bed for a dollar and a quarter. The pattern was not done in the thickest tufting, but really quite an engaging eagle set in circles was outlined in the centre. And when you think how much you have to pay for just a plain seersucker spread, you may agree with me that I got a bargain.

And I also desire one like this counterpane of E——'s done in flat, unsheared candle-wicking, so that the effect is almost that of cross-stitch. It is really very charming, with the beauty of a well-done sampler, and a little irregularity that guarantees the genuineness of its handiwork. Moreover, it is one of the oldest that I have known to be found hereabouts. Down in one corner, if you look very closely, you can see the initials of its worker, L. D. D., and the date, 1822. I have seen one dated 1815, but nothing earlier, and, as it is the older ones that are usually dated, I have formed a theory that the candle-wicking spread was a fashion of the very early nineteenth century. At least, I have never found any evidence to convince me that they were made in the eighteenth.

But the embroidered counterpane was undoubtedly made then, for it is full of the feeling of the delicate, charming "chinoiserie" that so much dominated domestic art in those days. Deepened by time, it



Collection of Mrs. Patten.

The "cross-stitch" candle-wicking spread. Notice the quaint formality of its pattern, and the initial and date in the corner.

Collection of Mrs. Patten.

Eighteenth-century linen spread embroidered in soft wools. The design is full of the delightful "chinoiserie" that so influenced English needlework during that time.

is almost écru in tone, this lightly quilted foundation of linen, and the flowers are embroidered on it in fine wools: deep roses, greens, yellows, and blues. I was never more surprised than when E—— pulled it out of its hiding-place. She said afterwards that she had always remembered "seeing it round," though she had n't the faintest idea of its early history. To have so charming a possession and not parade it! For it is as lovely as the sprigged surface of a fine porcelain cup made long and long ago; an "Orientale" of cloth delightful as César Cui's music. I know *I* should have made it a subject of conversation, even if nobody was talking antiques. You can always stamp your foot and speak of guns, you know.

In the past these hand-wrought household gods were very close to the hearts of their happy owners, I think, and history bears me out. In reading Governor Winthrop's Diary I ran across this quaint, illuminating passage. "A godly woman of the church of Boston, dwelling sometimes in London, brought with her a parcel of linnen of great value, which she set her heart too much upon, and had been at charge to have it all newly washed and curiously folded pressed, and so left it in press in her parlour over night; she had a negro maid went into the room very late and let fall some snuff of the candle upon the linnen, so as by the morning all the linnen was burned to a tinder, and the boards underneath, and some stools and a part of the wainscot burnt, and never

perceived by any in the house, tho' some lodged in the chamber overhead, and no ceiling between; but it pleased God that the loss of this linnen did her much good, both in taking off her heart from worldly comforts, and in preparing her for a far greater affliction by the untimely death of her husband who was slain not long after at the Isle of Providence." The "preparing" loss of that cherished linen has always seemed to me quite as pathetic as amusing.

And now I am come to my last counterpane. I think I am very like a small child; I invariably save the icing of my cake for the end. And this time you are to share my pleasure with me. I have never seen, nor expect to see, so beautiful a spread as this last one I am showing you. The delicate, cream-toned linen on which the design is worked has a little line running through it, and is a delightful piece of old hand-weaving. It is much larger than any others I have found, and the pattern is thicker, fuller, more impressive in its work. When I hung it up to have it photographed, it had all the beauty of a fine, antique bas-relief. And it came to me in the most romantic way. For once before I made public lamentation that I had never found a candle-wicking spread to suit my Empire bed, and some months later I got a letter from a little old lady miles and miles away in a state farther south, who asked me if I would like to buy this one; that it did not fit any bed she owned,

Collection of Mrs. Carr.

The finest candle-wicking spread I have ever seen. Notice the depth and the symmetry of the design.

Collection of Mrs. Patten.

Old knitted spread of the "fan" pattern. A very charming, delicate piece of work indeed.

and that she had nobody to leave it to when she died. Later she wrote me its history. Now, first I must tell you that Brigham Hill, with the old white house atop of it and its file of maple trees, lies across that blue, dividing river perhaps two miles, as the crow flies, from where I live. The linen of the counterpane had been woven by the little old lady's great-grandmother Brigham, the design drawn by Polly Hutchinson and the tufted embroidery done by Lydia Brigham! All of these surnames are still to be found in this little, nearly forgotten village; the old counterpane had just wandered home again. Is n't that a collecting coincidence for you? But it would n't fit my Empire bed; it was too large, and now a more fortunate friend owns it. Again a tragedy of the third dimension!

X

COLLECTOR'S LUCK IN THE CITY

I AM writing this because so many of you reproach me, gently it is true, but, none the less, reproach it is and nothing else. "Of course," you say, "you live in the country and it is easy for you to find these lovely old things in garrets and attics and at the wayside collector's shrine of auctions. But we who live in the city, what are we to do about it?" Now I am glad that I live in the country; I am a converted cockney, and I would not for one moment dispute the happiness of my antique pursuits here among the hills. But the real truth of the matter is that the better bargains are in the city. You must, of course, know how to look for them and where, and, equally, there is such a thing as "flair," and some people have it and so are blessedly fortunate.

Any city, particularly one along the eastern coast, is full of small, inexpensive old-furniture shops, and places where second-hand goods are sold, and little auction rooms — even big auction rooms on a rainy day or at an off season — hold many genuine bargains, things that you might seek for years in the country and never find. Then, too, a city dealer is apt to have a fairer valuation of his wares than many a farmer in the country, who often has an unshaken idea that every old thing is very valuable, and that

"people of means" — a favorite expression hereabouts — are willing to pay any price. To twice-tell a tale, there is my little old lady out on the hills, who still believes in her mistaken mine of wealth, that ancient, unpolished highboy. And once I hurried off without my lunch to see a treasure of an old desk, and found a rickety, jiggly soft-wood thing, painted a bright red, with one twisted willow-pull still on it, so broken that it was fit for nothing else than the wood-pile, and all the modest owner wanted was seventy-five dollars!

I could go on unendingly: the old "flow blue" that a farmer declared was over two hundred and fifty years old — had, in fact, "come over in the Mayflower"; that time in the unsuspecting days of my youth, when an honest husbandman sold me a quite modern Windsor chair for more than it had cost when it left its recent furniture-shop home; an uninteresting, scrolled, scrawled, late-Empire sofa for which a countrywoman wanted, as I remember the price, something like its weight in gold. I won't pursue the theme, for, after all, this chapter deals with what you can get in the city rather than what you can't buy in the country.

Two other reasons there are why old furniture is easier to find in cities than in rural districts: Eastern cities, that is, for the Atlantic coast was settled at least a century before the inland country where I live began to be colonized. So, naturally, the older

things just must be in the cities, you see. That 's my first reason, and a logical second is that for years, small dealers, journeying middlemen of the trade, have pretty well combed out the countryside, and added its largess to the treasures already in town. Really, I find a third, which is that there are so many more homes in the city to be broken up; so many more people to move away; and sell the furniture that they do not wish to take with them into their lives beyond. A lot of people, you know, don't like old things: luck for you and me.

I have chosen the Sheraton chair opposite to illustrate this very point. It is a late Sheraton, the type that is almost Empire, that influence showing in the massive band at the top, the carved acanthus leaves and rosettes, and in the heavier legs, no longer the slender fluting seen in Sheraton's earlier types. The wood is teak, such a tender amber-brown in tone; the slip seat a very fine meshed cane. And the family legend says that it was brought over to this country in one of the last of the old sailing-vessels of commerce. Six chairs and a sofa made up the set, and when my sister rather indirectly heard that there was some old furniture for sale at this Boston house, — the family were moving to the far West, — she found three of the chairs and the sofa ready to be hers. Two of the chairs she bought — a friend, the other — for fifteen dollars apiece, and I cannot help commending her noble, disinterested action in regard to

Collection of Mrs. Watson.

Late Sheraton chair made of teakwood with slip-seat of fine cane. Notice the details of the carving.

Collection of Mrs. Watson.

Maple eighteenth-century chair "picked up" in Cambridge, Mass. The splat is interestingly turned, and the base shows the earlier Jacobean influence.

From the author's collection.

Maple chair of the second half of the eighteenth century. Originally from Newburyport, but bought in Boston for $12

the sofa. It was a lovely piece, better even than the chairs, she tells me; she could have bought it for sixty-five dollars, a mere nothing as to value; instead, she persuaded the owner to take it West with her, and to keep such a beautiful heirloom in the family. Could old-furniture forbearance go further?

The maple chair on the opposite page is much earlier, — eighteenth century, perhaps about 1760 or 1770, — just a "middling" chair of maple, with a rush-seat and the elaborated splat-back which the Dutch influence brought in and with which Chippendale wrought such wonders. It came originally from Newburyport, — a fact that endeared it to me, because half of my ancestry comes from that small, very New England town, while the other half is fiercely Southern, — and I bought it for twelve dollars in one of the smaller, less-considered Charles Street shops, where I have, nevertheless, found many bargains. It did n't have a seat then.

The lower one, on page 161, is even older, although the splat-back is very similar in type; for the base shows the seventeenth-century baluster turning and the Spanish foot that Catharine of Portugal introduced into England. It was bought in a Boston suburb for eighteen dollars. It had been literally thrown upon a cruel world, for the last of the family that had owned it had died a short time before, and all their household goods had been taken over by a second-hand dealer.

But chairs are not the only things one can find. There are tables, and would n't you have liked to pick up the graceful mahogany tip-table I am showing you? It is a type that belongs to the late eighteenth century, a type usually called Hepplewhite because it has the delicate spade-feet which this cabinet-maker used so much. The wood is full of fire, with beautiful marking in the tipping-top, and, just as it is, old brass snap and all, it was found by M——, in Boston, for ten dollars. Long years ago it was brought from England to this country, and stayed quietly in one home, until the household was broken up and the furniture sold. The present owner heard of it just at the fortunate, psychological moment.

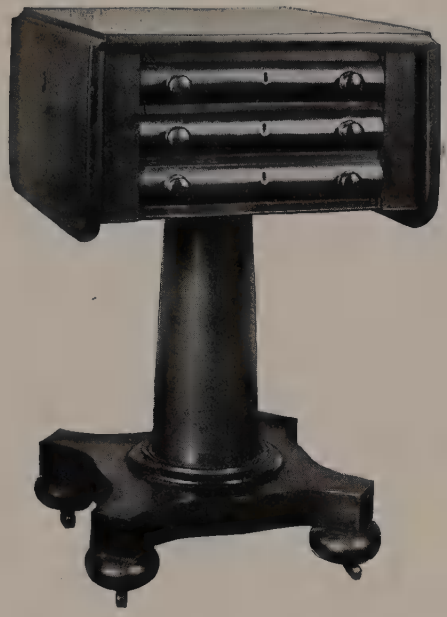
And I am almost equally fond of her old dining-table. You see how wide the centre-board is, — surely the tree was more than a century in growing! — but, alas, that you cannot behold the beautiful, polished depth of the mahogany! Full Empire it is; the base indicates that, with its central pedestal, the carved acanthus leaves, and the hand-engraved claw-feet of brass. I have so many pleasant associations with its intimate hospitality that maybe I 'd like it even if it were not so good; but its excellence makes a double motive of appreciation. This was bought in a large manufacturing city of northern Massachusetts for just forty-eight dollars. Have you ever tried to see how far that amount would go in modern furniture — for instance, in that delightful

Collection of Mrs. Watson.

Mahogany tip-table. A very fine piece brought over from England in the late eighteenth century.

Collection of Mrs. Watson.

Very handsome, massive Empire dining-table made of San Domingo mahogany and ornamented with acanthus carving and hand-engraved brass claw-feet.



Late Empire work-table. Another city "find" and an excellent example of the plainer type of table.

Footstool of the early-nineteenth-century period. Excellent wood in the frame.

Both table and stool from Mrs. Watson's collection.

Old pressed-glass candlesticks with glass *bobèches* and "drops."

This Sheffield cake-basket in the pierced design is very charming and light.

These two pieces are from the collection of Mrs. Watson.

type known to some dealers as "a unique William and Mary table in the popular Jacobean finish"? Because, if you have n't, it will be discipline to your soul.

The mahogany work-table with the three drawers, which are actually only two and the third just pretending to be, is a good example of the later, plainer Empire about 1820. The proportions are especially just, and the beauty of the veneered top — Empire's strongest attraction, I think — is quite unusual; altogether a desirable piece for a bedroom or a sitting-room. It was bought in Cambridge for fourteen dollars.

And M—— has been lucky in little things, too. The small footstool which I have tried and tried to get in the country, always quite without success, and which she "attracted" to her collecting personality for a dollar and a half; the charming pierced Sheffield cake-basket which she found in a second-hand shop and bought for eight dollars; the pressed-glass candlesticks with the scalloped *bobèches* and little dangling, jangling glass bells which were eight more; and the "courting-mirror"!

Now this is such a particular piece that I feel that I must begin a new paragraph with its history — its immediate history, I mean, for, like so many of these now cherished waifs and strays, I do not know the story of the days of its youth. But first, may I be a little didactic? Lockwood has an interesting account

and version of this type. Until I read what he had to say, I always accepted the version of them as being just "courting-mirrors," so contrived and packed as to be easily swung on the saddle of some visiting Zek'l who wished to appear at his rustic best before Huldy. But now I think differently, or, at least, with modifications, for who would dispute Lockwood? He writes: —

"In the vicinity of many of the seaport towns, especially about Salem, has been found a looking-glass which was very small and usually set in a box. These looking-glasses are very crudely made, the mouldings being very simply glued together and covered with a very thin metal resembling what is known as a Dutch metal. Between these mouldings are strips of painted glass, and at the centre of the top is painted a basket of flowers. The entire frame sets in a shallow box, and has a wooden slide-cover. These looking-glasses have acquired the name of courting-glasses for which no good reason can be assigned. It has been puzzling to trace their origin, but after an examination of a large number, the writer is convinced that they are of Chinese origin, and were brought to this country from China by sea-captains. Some of the reasons for this conclusion are: That the frame is not made in the method employed by Europeans; the wood is the same as is found on frames of a number of paintings on glass which are indisputably of Chinese origin, and all that the writer

Collection of Mrs. Watson.

The "courting-mirror," as perfect as the day it was made. Probably brought from China about 1800.

Collection of Mrs. Carleton.

Lustre pitchers and mug, all from the city: each one beautiful, each one different.

has seen which were in their original condition have, between the plate of glass and the thin wooden back, strips of Chinese paper; the painting on the glass is done in the same manner and in the same peculiar colors as those that were made in China. The frame also indicates its Eastern origin, not being in a form used in Europe at that time."

The one shown on page 171 is in perfect condition, in the old box, with the old nails holding it in place; it might, except for a certain mellowness that the detaining hand of Time always gives, have just come from Canton or Shanghai. I wonder where its first American home was? M—— found it in a small second-hand shop on an eighteenth-century Boston court, not so very far, really, from the old Boston "Measuring Stone," and its price was ten dollars and a half. When I look at it I think of the true worth of a dealer's heart, for a dealer, who is a collector as well, directed her to this treasure instead of buying it for himself. But then he is a most unusual man; once he offered me what I believe was a McIntyre mantel, part of the dilapidated beauty of an old Lynn house, — and certainly its graceful carving justified my belief, — for fifteen dollars. Only the knowledge that my house was already full of mantels that Webster must have leaned against, or looked at, anyhow, kept me from buying it on the spot.

It is lustre, however, that proves more than any

other thing the value of city collecting. In the first place, you rarely find complete sets in the country, nowadays, and, if you do, the owner appraises them far out of all proportion to their real worth. I know where there is one such set. It is averagely attractive, nothing more, and I doubt if the good woman would sell it for a hundred and fifty dollars. On the other hand, in a fairly expensive city shop, I have had the opportunity to buy a set of pink lustre, quite as complete and infinitely more charming, for seventy-five dollars. And I can't forget the long, long trip a friend and I took one autumn afternoon through a russet-brown country that was getting ready for its winter sleep. I could go on poetically about the farmhouse we visited and the farmer himself, for his eyes were as blue as the fairy-flax, and his hair certainly as yellow as the corn-stubble in his fields beyond. And I am sure that his heart was utterly guileless; he just did n't know. I say this still, even when I recall the little, worthless lustre pitcher that looked as if it had come straight from a five-and-ten-cent store; and was so very bad that actually you could n't tell whether it was old or new.

"It 's a real museum piece," he announced proudly.

"What do you think it is worth?" I asked in idle curiosity, for nothing could have induced me to buy it, and I can only thank my Guardian Angel that I had put it back safely on the table before he replied, "Twenty-five dollars." Sheer surprise would

have made me drop it, I know. Now, of all these lovely pitchers (see page 172), all bought in Boston, not one cost even half that amount, and they are all genuine and valuable as well as beautiful. I like best the little one at the left; gold lustre with an underflush of pink, and raised figures in a creamy white. I think it must be Wedgwood, not only because he first made this sort of lustre, but because the designs are pure eighteenth-century classicism, and the little grape-and-vine relief pattern at the top precisely like a set I have in blue and white that is authentically marked Wedgwood. Another chosen one is the creamer at the other side, for the shape really is unusually graceful and the vivid yellow band so very attractive with its brightly colored flower decoration.

I have tried to save my best city-collecting tale for the last. A friend of mine who lives in an apartment house was moving in just as the people above were moving out. As they left, one of the family said to her, "We've dumped some old furniture in the cellar. We don't want it, but if it's any use to you, keep it by all means." When my lucky friend looked, she found a very good stenciled rocker, and a gilt Empire mirror with a delightful painted picture at the top.

All of these things, really, can happen to you, people of little faith, who live in the city. I speak with deep feeling, for only to-day I have been offered a very modest four-slat chair for the unblushing price

of fifty dollars. That was here in the hills, in the tiniest village! A few weeks ago in Philadelphia I bought a five-slat beauty, with well-turned stretchers, ball-feet, and the old rush-seat, for fifteen. Of course, you 've got to know the game: what to buy and where to go to get it; and it 's always going to be a case of *Caveat emptor*. But this is a collecting rule that proves equally true, in city and country alike.

XI

THE FRIENDLY FIREPLACE

Shut in from all the world without,
We sat the clean-winged hearth about.

Do you know, I had n't the faintest idea what a "clean-winged hearth" really was until I had one myself? I have always loved "Snowbound," but I think it actually came alive to me first when I had the happiness of restoring an old fireplace, and ministering to its many needs: seeing that the old tongs and shovel and warming-pan were burnished and ranged in an honorable row; that the skimmers and ladles shone; that the foot-warmer was in place, and the great bronzed turkey-wing ready to sweep up the hearth; in fact, that all the paraphernalia, the gleaming symbols that reflected eighteenth-century farmhouse life, looked, as nearly as I possibly could contrive, as they must have looked in the days of their youth, more than a hundred years ago. And another fireside poem warms my imagination and makes me content; Thackeray's lovely rendering of Ronsard's lovelier sonnet:

Some winter night shut snugly in
Beside the faggots in the hall,
I think I see you sit and spin
Surrounded by your maidens all.

Of course, by that time, the hearth no longer blazed in the centre of the hall, for that belonged to

the Middle Ages, and Ronsard sang his lays in the sixteenth century. The next step was to replace this smoky central domestic altar by the wall-chimney with a projecting brick hood. We always think of old fireplaces as being so extremely large, but at first they were only moderate in size, and later became the enormous things that they were in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries because their builders had the false notion that the larger the fire the greater the warmth in the room. It remained for the sensible later eighteenth century to discover that such fireplaces not only burned a great deal of wood, but that the cold air was thrust by the draught in great masses through the chimney, that fuel was becoming scarce, and that a smaller fireplace would not only be economical, but would throw the heat farther out into the room.

Look at the old fireplace in the "Paul Revere House," an excellent example of the ordinary hearth of most "middling" families in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, with its accompanying pots and hooks and trammels, its wide spaces, its oven, and even, hanging there with attendant powder-horn and canteen, a musket that I am sure must resemble "the old Queen's arm that Gran'ther Young brought back f'om Concord busted." Lucy Larcom, in her quaint, delightful, lavender-scented autobiography, "A New England Girlhood," paints one of these fireplaces so much more charmingly than

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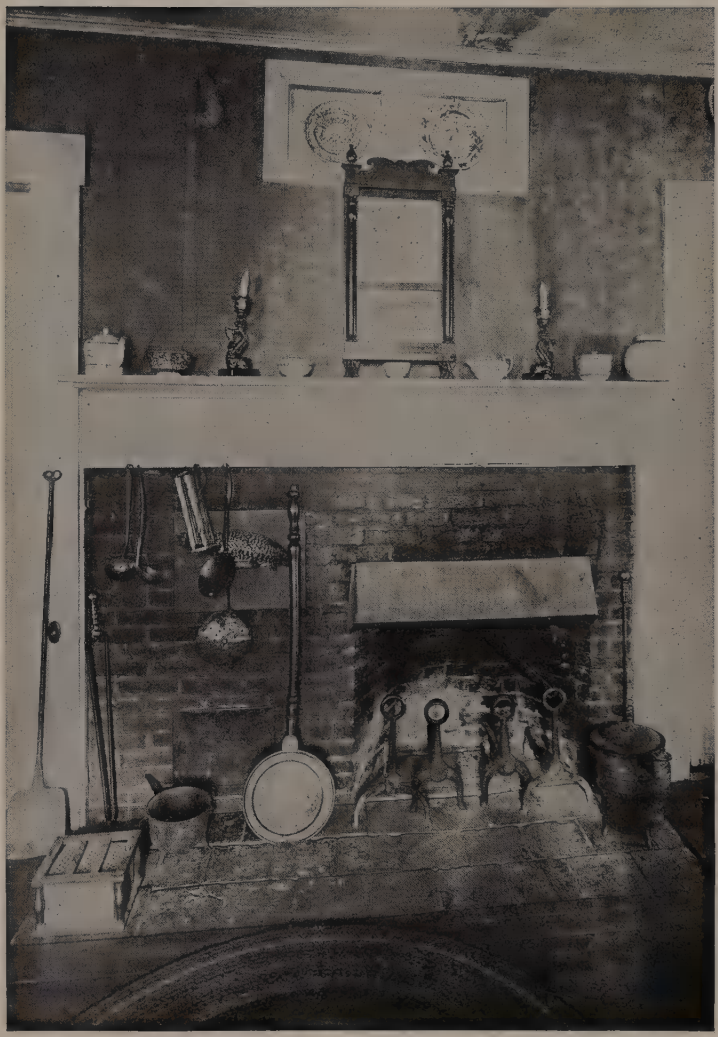
Seventeenth-century fireplace from the Paul Revere House, Boston. This fireplace is so deep that you can catch glimpses of the sky as you look up the chimney.

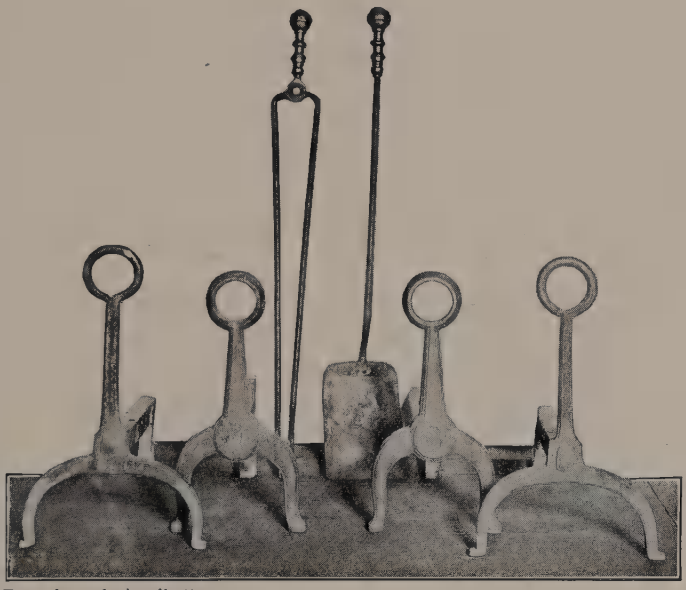


The author's late-eighteenth-century fireplace with old kettles, shovels, skimmers, and turkey-wing to brush up the hearth.

I can hope to that I am quoting her words, "The fireplace was deep, and there was a 'settle' in the chimney-corner, where three of us younger girls could sit together and toast our toes on the andirons (two Continental soldiers in full uniform, marching one after the other), while we looked up the chimney into a square of blue sky, and sometimes caught a snow-flake on our foreheads; or sometimes smirched our clean aprons (high-necked and long-sleeved ones, known as 'tiers') against the swinging crane with its sooty pot-hooks and trammels." She goes on to praise the cooking done at such firesides: "Never was there anything better than my mother's fire-cake"; and really, when you think it over and begin to examine the many conveniences that our Colonial ancestors had, you will see that they were not at all badly off. Certainly no modern contrivance has bettered the slow, full, juicy method of roasting meat upon a spit.

My own century-later fireplace — the house was built in the late seventeen hundreds — is small in comparison with these huge affairs, but many of the devices have been retained: the crane, for instance, and the old brick oven. Is n't it interesting to think that this was a pre-visioning of our modern fireless cooker? The fire was made in the upper oven, and then, when the bricks were thoroughly heated, the embers were raked down below, the pies and beans and Indian pudding slid into the oven by that long

shovel-like "peel," and the iron door shut upon them. How sad that a stern husband and a defective furnace flue prevent me from cooking this way in the blessed year of nineteen hundred and eighteen, and so gratifying my antiquarian instincts! I am going back just a minute to this old "peel" or "slice," for it was so very important, you know, no bride's plenishing being complete without one. Ours we discovered buried in the cellar of a fraternity house nearby, and at first we were puzzled, till we remembered that this house had started life as a private dwelling, a local mansion even, for here Matthew Arnold was entertained on his well-known, disdainful trip through New England. At various places through Northern New Hampshire I have picked up my old utensils: from attics and garrets they have come, and that tall, three-legged pot was the first thing I ever bought at an auction, my "opening wedge." I shall never forget the auctioneer; he had such a good "line" as our boys at college say. Why I bid on it at all, I don't know, because certainly my theories of antique harmony were then in their infancy. It was a quick impulse, but it did seem so entrancing to buy anything for ten cents. He handed it over with a bow and the remark that it was "the latest thing in fireless cookers"; whereupon an old woman who was sorry for my youth and inexperience said, "Don't you believe him, child. It 's to set in the coals and cook your vittles in." I have not made



From the author's collection.

Old hand-wrought iron andirons; these and the brass beaded shovel and tongs were picked up in Vermont and averaged something under five dollars.

From the parlor in Webster cottage.

Old Franklin fire-frame with "steeple-top" andirons, shovel, and tongs.

quite that use of it, but I do know that with the cover inverted it is the nicest thing in the world to hold a plate of toasted muffins, and keep them warm while we are having tea beside the fire.

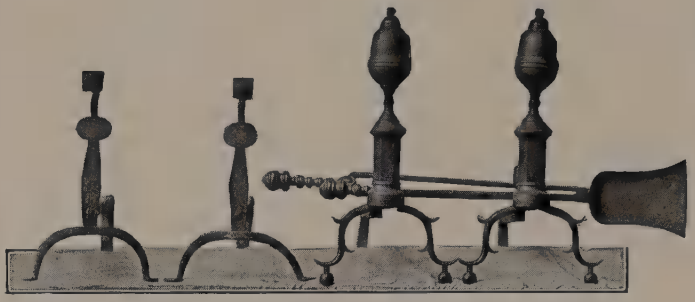
The four andirons, one pair tall and slender, the middles short and squat, I bought at other auctions, and I am explaining the rather unusual fashion of two pairs at once. It saves me from using a fire-screen, and forms a fire-protection that I really prefer. All told, the two pairs of andirons and the shovel and tongs shown with them in the detailed group cost something under five dollars. I really am so very fond of this fireplace; so many people must have sat before its embers and enjoyed its warmth as I do; and, in the dusk of a winter twilight, it throws such an enchanting glow out on the snow that I can see the witches making their tea very comfortably indeed.

I am quite as proud of my Franklin fire-frame, although I am not so intimate with it. It is stately; I honor and revere it more; but nobody has ever dubbed it "the friendly fireplace," the name that the one in the dining-room goes by. Benjamin Franklin invented these stoves and fireplaces in 1742, but it is said that "Baron" Stiegel really perfected and harmonized their use to the ordinary dwelling. This frame was probably built in when the house was erected, and is not a later addition, as so frequently happens. How delighted we were, when, removing

the huge soapstone stove that obscured its beauties, we saw revealed its columns and the delicate tracery of acanthus leaves just inside.

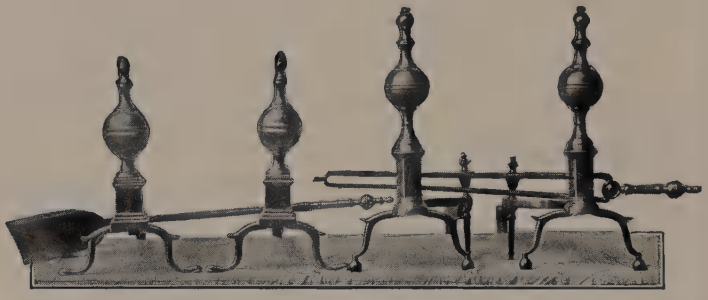
I am very proud of my andirons, too. My favorite junk-man brought them, and oh, my Collecting Friends, listen to my guiding words, and if you have n't a favorite junk-man, get him at once. For he travels over the country, not by avocation as you do, but by the law of livelihood's stern necessity; he covers ten miles to your one; and he will go to places you would never dream of discovering. Of course, at first, until he is trained, he will bring in fearful rubbish — things that no self-respecting collector would have in the house; but, if you persevere, such treasures as these may be your reward. I can never cease to remember Mr. Plotkin's first appearance, smiling at the delight he was going to confer upon me, with a battered bird-cage in one hand, a quite modern, hardware-store kettle in the other. I dashed his confident first illusions; but he improved as time went on, and these gracious, graceful andirons are the result. "Steeple-tops" they are called, and the shovel and tongs match them. At an easy estimate they are worth seventy-five dollars, and, if you went to a very select shop, you might have to pay a hundred for them. The price I gave was twenty-five, so you can see my method pays. I need the little pointing jamb-hooks that go with them; I know where there is a pair, but the obdurate owner insists that he likes them quite

Another late-eighteenth century fireplace. Notice how high the crane is hung.



Collection of Dr. Coburn.

Old hand-wrought iron andirons, and "acorn tops," sometimes called "lemon tops."



Collection of Dr. Coburn.

Eighteenth-century brass andirons.

as well as I do, even if he has n't any andirons to match, and warms himself just by a commonplace stove. Still, the true collector never despairs.

Some connoisseurs insist that andirons should be of wrought iron, bronze, or ormolu, giving as their reason that steel and brass require over-much polishing. All of which may be true; and certainly, when you consider all the brass and all the white paint that the Colonial housewife had to clean, you feel as if she had conscientiously laid out work for herself; but, somehow, when I have rubbed my andirons and polished my warming-pan until it shines like the harvest-moon, I know that I have burnished my own soul!

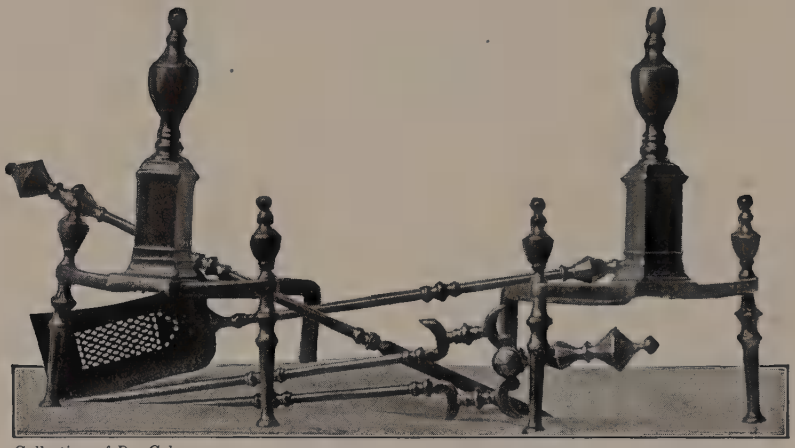
Can you see how my fire-frame is built quite out and forward? That throws the heat into the room as I have never known any other device to do, making warmth possible, even without the aid of a furnace, in the coldest weather. We proved this one dreadful never-to-be-forgotten night last winter, when the thermometer went lower than the Oldest Inhabitant ever remembered, went down and down and lingered in those fearful forty-belows for a fortnight. And on the very coldest evening of all, when it was too late to send for a plumber or to go anywhere else, our ancient, loved furnace up and died on our hands, and we had to drag our beds down and sleep colonially in front of the fire, which answered beautifully, as long as we could remember not to go to sleep, and to

pile and pile on the logs. Then we could keep warm, but to wake in the gray, frozen dawn to a blackened hearth! I know now what Cotton Mather meant by "the long and strong bands of a New England winter" being laid upon him; I realize feelingly why feather-beds were in vogue. But this I know, too; that there is nothing more delightful to fall asleep by than this wavering, flickering, rosy light, which glows and wanes and glows again and transfigures everything that it touches.

Naturally, all this collecting luck has n't been mine. Observe, please, the wonderful set of "acorn-tops," — andirons, fender, jamb-hooks, shovel and tongs, — belonging to L——. She found them in a little Vermont town just across the river from us, and even at the price she paid for them, they are an immense bargain, for such a complete set is almost impossible to find nowadays. And a still better "antique-ing" tale concerns itself with that other elaborate set. My friend, the doctor, who discovered them, always speaks of them as his most fortunate gamble. Driving through the countryside at dusk, he stopped at a lonely farmhouse to ask the way; and the talk taking a collecting turn, the farmer said he had some old andirons up in the attic that had been there for years, and that he never wanted to use. Would the doctor give him two dollars for them? The doctor replied that he was too tired to move, but that he was willing to take a sporting chance, and pay what was

Collection of Mrs. Carleton.

Andirons, shovel and tongs, jamb-hooks and fender all of the "acorn-top" pattern. A rare and valuable set.



Collection of Dr. Coburn.

The "two-dollar gamble," an extremely handsome set, probably English and worth easily a hundred dollars.

asked, if the farmer would bring them out and he not be obliged to leave the carriage and climb the attic stairs. And the reward of his faith was this splendid set for which he has frequently been offered a hundred dollars.

But here is my climax of collector's luck. Some acquaintances of mine, digging in the cellar of an eighteenth-century country house, found a pair of old "Hessian" andirons, — you know how rare they are! — and discovered, by dint of questioning and search in family tradition, that a most patriotic great-great-grandmother had buried them in utter disdain at the time of the Revolution. There they had lain safely through more than a century, in perfect condition, except for a little rust.

If you have n't a "friendly fireplace," do get one! It will mean so much to you; so much more to your children. Beside my "clean-winged hearth" I have sat and worked and dreamed dreams, and found the inspiration to fulfill them. Best of all, it has taught me something of the valuable lesson of Colonial life.

XII

OLD DOLLS AND THEIR FURNITURE

Some deserted city stands;
All its children, sweep and prince,
Grown to manhood ages since.
There I 'll come when I 'm a man
With a camel caravan;
Light a fire in the gloom
Of some dusty dining-room;
See the pictures on the walls,
Heroes, fights and festivals;
And in a corner find the toys
Of the old Egyptian boys.

I THINK I am somewhat like Stevenson's small, vainglorious traveler. There is a dream I often dream, a little bit sorry, a little bit glad, a confusion of sleeping emotions. I am always wandering along some forsaken town, entering its houses, hunting through its attics, and always I find the put-away playthings of a long time ago. I handle them with delight, these little forgotten cradles and chests, and then I invariably awake with tears in my eyes, wondering where the children are. Sometimes in real life I have fulfilled my dreams, and because collecting, in most of its phases, is such a blessed thing, I am going to let you share my pleasure, and play for a while with the sort of toys that might have amused your grandmother, and her mother, and even further back than that.

Collection of Francis Bigelow.

A little early-eighteenth-century chest with "teardrop" handles.

Collection of Mrs. Watson.

Miniature sofa or *chaise longue*, early eighteen hundreds.

A group of old dolls from the Witch House, Salem, Massachusetts. Perhaps none of them dates much earlier than 1800, though the one in the middle is probably a little before that time; observe her slender hands and tapering fingers (we will not mention her face).

Let 's begin with the dolls, the humanest, the most sentimentally enduring of all playthings. There they sit, a sedate group, waiting at the old Witch House in Salem for their little mothers to come back and get them. Perhaps none of them date much earlier than eighteen hundred, though I am inclined to place the one in the middle a little before that time. I think she is an older doll dressed in a somewhat later fashion. Observe the discretion of her pantalettes, the neatness of her fringed cape, both of the *larmoyant* pre-Victorian period. Next in age comes the one behind her — that dolly so neatly dressed, whose bonnet is tied so trimly under her chin, the most "waiting" looking one of all. At the left is the sort of doll I have always fancied Beth's "Joanna" to be like, and the other two look as if they had been dressed and played with and loved in 1860. And about them all there is something infinitely pathetic, don't you think?

> Me in her fresh young arms she bore.
> See, I am small,
> Only a doll,
> But I keep her kiss forevermore.

They might all of them be saying that. And where are those little lost mothers now?

I wish I could find for you to see — as I have found the letter — a doll described in 1741 by Helena Pelham. This letter, written to her niece, Penelope,

I quote entirely because it is one of the most revealing documents that has rewarded my search: —

febury the 19; 1741.

DEAR LITTLE UNKNOWN PENELOPE, —

I must love you childe for your name. You are the preteyest little wrighter I ever knew. I hope to convirce with you by letter as ofen as you have an opportunity, that I may see how finley you improve. you have all your requests granted. See what it is to be a pretey little begger. a baby a red trunke and a lock and key. and I my little childe have sent you a blue ring and a necklace, and a Pelerin to wair a bought you neck, such a one as your baby has on. I should be mightley pleasd to see you at the opening of the trunke, for I am sure you will be in greate Joy. pray let me hear how you like all your things and give my service to your mama. so a Due my little unknown girl I shall be allways your loveing Aunt

H. PELHAM.

I cannot help hoping that this little lass of long ago was grateful, and wrote back affectionate letters to that loving aunt so far across the seas. Helena Pelham was always sending Penelope something or other. In an earlier letter she mentions "a cap I drest her up and pink and silver ribbons in it and a pair of silver glove tops and a tippet"; and this

brings me back to one of my greatest grievances. It is women who have preserved and urged on civilization. It is they who should have recorded it. I cannot help thinking that, if Mrs. Mather or Mrs. Sewall had written the diaries and letters, instead of their worthy husbands, we might have known a great deal more of the actual life of the times. I find myself constantly hungry for more details, more facts than I discover in reading these old records. Cotton Mather retires to his study and prays for hours with his little daughter Katy for her soul's good; Judge Sewall begs to send a friend a piece of his daughter's wedding-cake with a Latin inscription! His wife would have sent the receipt. Now what I want to find is Mrs. Sewall saying something like this: "Gave Judith today a piece of blew lutestring and of the green figured paddisway (ordered by my honored husband, from Mr. Love of London) that she might make her baby a silk dress-gown. She groweth in diligence daily with her needle." Or, from Mrs. Mather: "Jemima hath neatly finished Curtens and Vallens of yellow watered Camlet for a bed that her brother Samuel hath whittled for her. She desires her loveing duty to her dear Grandmother." They must have played — poor little children — sometimes, even if they did knit their stockings and mittens at four years old. Sammy Mather was constantly being rebuked for idleness by his father who wrote, "I must think of some

exquisite and obliging Wayes, to abate Sammy's inordinate Love of Play." *I* want to know how he idled. His mother would have told me.

But no matter how rigorous the Puritan life was you may be sure that there were many games and some playthings. Mr. Higginson wrote in 1695 to say that, if toys were sent over to this country in small quantities, there would surely be a sale for them; and in 1712, "Boxes of Toys" were listed as part of the cargo brought into Boston by a privateersman. Indeed, it is surprising that so many of these fragile things have lasted, outliving the hands that played with them. The little chest with its "teardrop" handles is proof of this: lovely in itself, it is a piece of doll's furniture that made some little Colonial girl very happy in the early seventeen hundreds. Think of the small hands that patted away lovingly in its tiny drawers their treasures of sprigged muslin and brocade.

From the Witch House comes a most interesting group, but of later pieces. The beds are both Empire, the larger whittled out, probably, by a jack-knife. The tables and secretary are Empire, too, — fancy the fortunate dolly who owned all this furniture! — and the bureau suggests the sleigh-front style (1820 to 1830). The upholstered chair with its quaint chintz cover makes me think a little of some of the chairs that Hogarth drew, — could it date back so far, do you think? — and the two in front are of the

Most of this furniture once belonged to little New England maidens, though the two chairs in front are of the Early-Victorian type, called "Gothic." The beds are Empire, as are the tables and secretary. How the creation of these tiny replicas must have delighted the men who made them! These pieces are now in the Witch House at Salem, Massachusetts.

Collection of Mrs. Watson.

Here the bureau and stand are Early-Victorian, the bed Empire, and the cradle of an even earlier date. The fun grown-ups must have had making these tiny things!

Collection of Mrs. Watson.

The table and sofa are frankly Victorian in type; the left-hand chair has a feeling of Sheraton, and the other chair is a rather well-imitated copy of the old turned "Carver" chairs.

Collection of Mrs. Watson.

This furniture is all Early-Victorian. The right-hand chair shows a slight Sheraton feeling. As a whole, this group of furniture is less interesting than any of the others here shown.

type made in the early-Victorian period and called "Gothic."

The miniature sofa may have been made for a little child to sit on, or for her to "play dolls" with. I like to think that the second conjecture is true, and anyhow I 'm sure she must have done it. To have a tempting sofa "just like Mamma's *chaise longue* in the drawing-room, and quite the right size for dear Araminta," and then not use it! It 's unthinkable. It was probably made in the early eighteen hundreds, an Empire piece as the rope-carving and the beauty of the wood indicate; and now it has been re-polished and re-covered and passes its days as a footstool, after a long, dusty exile in an odds-and-ends shop.

The bureau and stand on the opposite page are early-Victorian, the bed Empire and hand-turned, and the cradle of an even earlier date. Frankly mid-Victorian in type are the sofa and table; the left-hand chair has a decided feeling of Sheraton, and, oddly enough, the other chair is a rather well-imitated copy of the old turned chairs, commonly called "Carver chairs" because they resemble one that Governor Carver brought over in the Mayflower. But the lower group of two chairs and a table is again early-Victorian, the right-hand chair showing a slight Sheraton influence, and, on the whole, is less interesting than the other pieces.

The little bed on page 205, capable of holding

quite a good-sized dolly, and the cherry bureau are really very attractive. The bedposts are well-proportioned and turned, and the bureau — somehow, a sleigh-front for a doll does n't distress me anywhere near so much as a sleigh-front for myself — is quite appealing. The little bits of china on it I picked up at an auction for five cents each; the tiny pitcher, with its creamy paste and its little sprigs, makes you think of some of the old Queensware. Very few such pieces remain, though undoubtedly they were made quite in proportion to the furniture. A friend of mine has a delightful doll's set of pressed glass, dating back to about 1830 and fine as a magnified snowflake; and I have heard recently of a set of doll's silver in a Georgian pattern.

My last piece is not doll's furniture, speaking in the strictest sense. But it is a chair that so many generations of little girls have sat in, holding their dollies, that I could not resist showing it to you. Its date is, perhaps, the middle of the eighteenth century, and I found it "up t' Etny-way" as we call the hills back of us. We stopped — L—— and the Littlest Daughter and I — at a farmhouse, to ask for a direction and a drink of water. It was a quaint old hundred-year house, rambling out into sheds and overwhelming barns, as is our North Country fashion. By the gate grew a great thicket of cinnamon-roses, ah, so sweet!

It is raw April with us now; outside a wet wind is

This little bed is capable of holding quite a good-sized dolly. The cherry, sleigh-front bureau is very pretty, and the sprigged china, like Queensware, was picked up at auction for five cents.

An old chair with the ubiquitous Teddy Bear in place of the doll whose throne it used to be.

blowing, and my candlelight spills itself into pools that lie under my windows — a writer lives ahead of the season, you know; but, as I think back, I can smell those roses still. I am again in midsummer. A trailing vine had laced itself across the front door — that door is never opened, I know, but for weddings and funerals — and we went around to the side porch. The nicest old lady in the world let us into a wide, clean kitchen, a kitchen that had a well in it. Imagine the joy of playing Indians, of being besieged, under such enticing circumstances! She showed us her treasures — and even sold us some of them; she gave us big, red, shiny apples, and, last of all, led us way up into the attic. On the rafters we spied this little chair; so old, and there so long, that she did not know of its existence, and she was over eighty. When I asked her if I might buy it she said, "My dear, I 'd like to give it to you for your little girl"; and now it belongs to the Littlest Daughter, who sits in it in her turn, holding her dolly.

And I have written another beatitude: "Blessed is the true collector for she shall inherit the earth."

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